

# EDWARD EDWARDS

THOMAS GREENWOOD

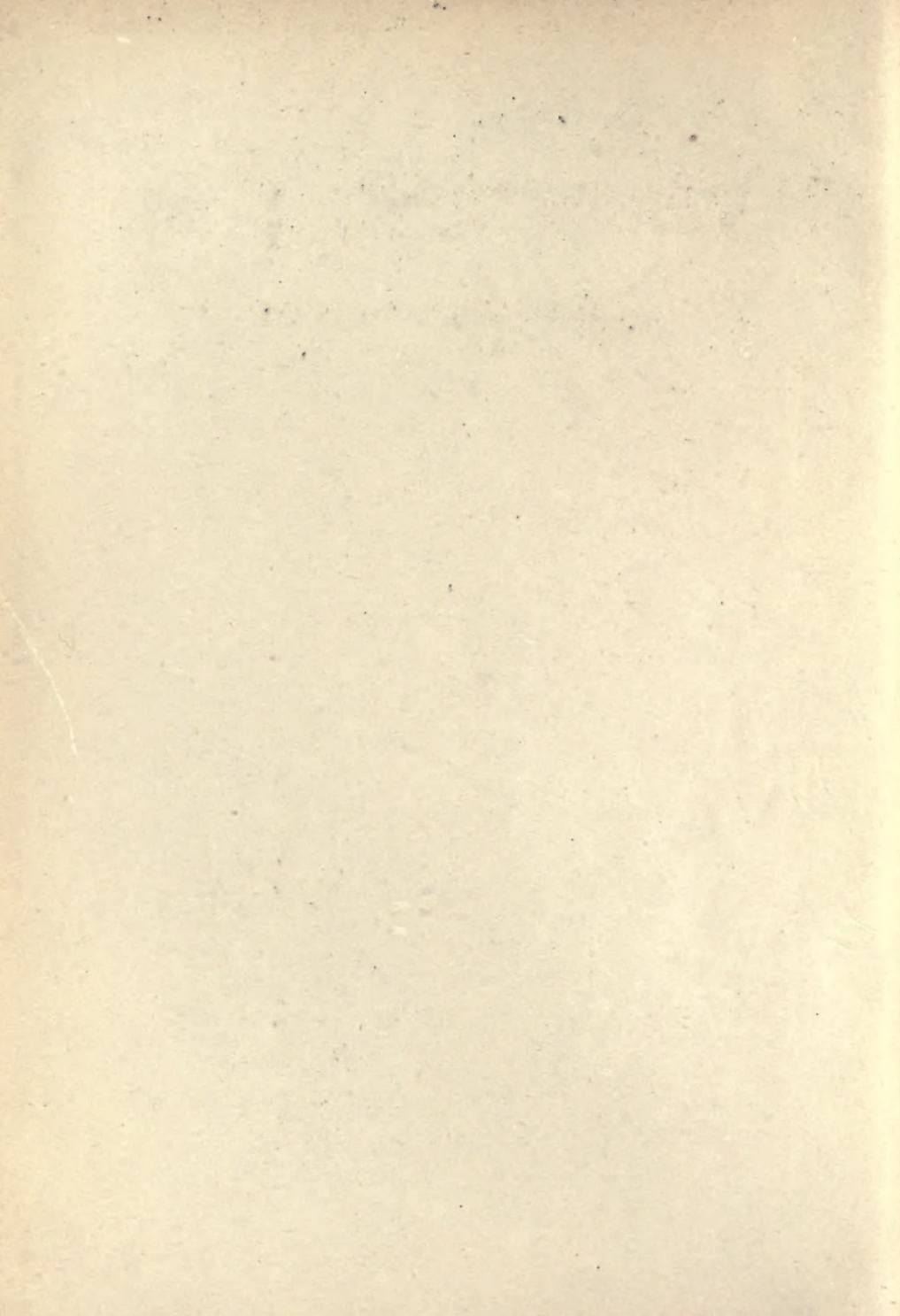
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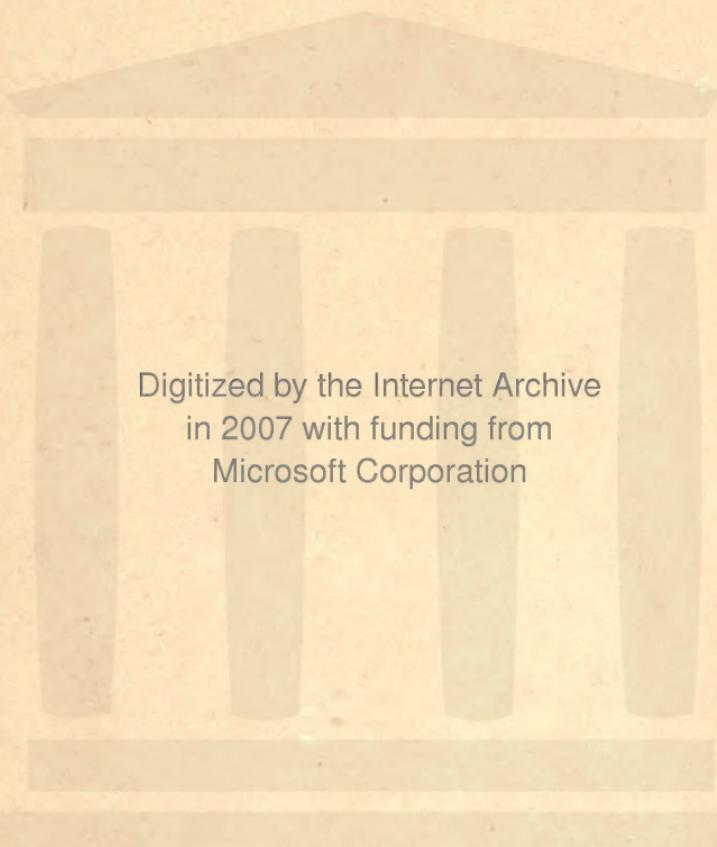
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EDWARD EDWARDS



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EDWARD EDWARDS

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BY

THOMAS GREENWOOD

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1902



TO THE  
FORGOTTEN BENEFACTORS  
OF HUMANITY



## PREFACE.

THE preparation of this Appreciation of the work of Edward Edwards, and the Digest of his evidence before the several Parliamentary Committees, has been a labour of love. It has entailed a great deal of work and much unproductive research, and has left behind a feeling of having hewn away a small mountain to make a hillock, but the hillock was well worth making. Such biographical details as it has been possible to glean have been included, but these are of a scanty character. I have endeavoured to keep the volume within a reasonable limit. Edwards' life was of a simple and ordinary nature, and its interest with the reading public rests on his being the chief pioneer of the public library movement, and with such of his writings as are likely to have a permanent character. No history of the second half of the nineteenth century would be complete without due notice being taken of public libraries, the people's universities, and these are the outcome to an important degree of Edwards' earnest work and abiding enthusiasm on behalf of these institutions. The principal materials for this record have been found in his private diaries, which extend, so far as they have been discovered, throughout the following years: 1844 to 1852, 1854 to 1858, 1860 to 1868, 1870, 1881, 1882 and 1884, making twenty-seven in all. In the Manchester Public Reference Library there are batches of

correspondence addressed to Edwards ranging mainly from 1838 to 1869. So far as was practicable I have endeavoured to come into touch with those living who knew him, but these sources have not yielded much information. I have been enabled to acquire the remainder of his books, a number of them containing notes; a considerable amount of correspondence up to the time of his death; a number of note-books; the existing manuscript of the second edition of *Memoirs of Libraries*; guard-books full of memoranda and some other miscellaneous matters. The correspondence includes over ninety letters addressed to Edwards by his sisters. What is in my hands will, I hope, find an ultimate resting-place in the Manchester Public Reference Library. There are missing diaries and note-books, but the appearance of the present volume may lead to these being placed with the other material indicated.

The public library movement has many earnest friends, and this suggests two appropriate ways of perpetuating Edwards' name. An "Edward Edwards" Librarians' Home of Rest, at Niton, and an "Edward Edwards" Library School, which should be the headquarters of the Library Association and all other library organisations, as well as a centre for the municipal library world. If any generous friend of the cause, with the necessary means, will make either of these suggestions possible, all who have this movement at heart will be grateful. The Library Association will, I do not doubt, gladly take charge of any endowment for these purposes.

Librarians all over the country, in the Colonies of the Empire and in the United States, have shown the

warmest satisfaction with the efforts made to arouse a renewed interest in the work and writings of this man. The letters received by me, in acknowledgment of the receipt of the first volume of the second edition of the *Memoirs of Libraries* issued for presentation, were cheering and helpful.

To Dr. Richard Garnett, C.B., I am indebted for the active and sympathetic interest with which he has followed this undertaking throughout. He has also been good enough to read the proof sheets. To Mr. James Duff Brown, Librarian of the Finsbury Public Libraries, my thanks are given for the compilation of the index. I am grateful to those who have sent me letters received from Edwards.

Should this little volume serve in any measure to aid in securing for Edward Edwards the recognition due to his splendid services in the cause of education and librarianship, its sole purpose will be accomplished. His memory deserves to be held in everlasting remembrance among the great mass of users of municipal public libraries.

To Edwards I owe much of the stimulus which led to an increased activity in the public library movement. The year of his death saw the issue of my first writing upon the subject, and what then became to me an interesting hobby remains the same after the lapse of years. Edwards is to me as a library father, and if I can cultivate but a fraction of his enthusiasm and able advocacy of municipal libraries, I shall be content.

T. G.

FRITH KNOWL, ELSTREE,  
HERTS, April, 1902.

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## CHAPTER I.

### INTRODUCTORY.

The mere tradition of a great ancestry has sometimes helped, visibly, to mould the characters of men who were intrinsically strong enough to stand alone. Reveries about historic birth and the doings of historic foregoers have frequently given colour to a lifetime, even when the man who has indulged in them bore Nature's own stamp that he was one of the chosen few who are to hand down greatness rather than to derive it.

—EDWARDS, *Life of Raleigh.*

EDWARD EDWARDS had in him the essentials of a strong mind, and an individuality which impressed itself upon everything he undertook: yet less could scarcely be known of any one who had filled an important place in a great public movement. For this, the modest, retiring nature of the man was no doubt partly responsible, though it is doubtful if there is a parallel instance on record of the chief pioneer of a large and widespread public improvement being so generally unrecognised, even within the circle of his own profession. Reasons for this lack of appreciation will emerge in the course of this narrative.

The idea of a public library in its modern conception, as a democratic institution freely accessible to all, had not even emerged from the cloud of speculation with which the question was surrounded, when Edwards first gave his attention to the subject. It is somewhat perplexing to find many of the most eminent men of the period, extending from 1830 to 1850, debating with all seriousness, not such a matter as what is best in literature to put before the people, but whether it would be safe, wise and politic to admit the general public to libraries at all. In these later times, it appears strange to read

some of the arguments for, and against, making libraries accessible to readers, when it is remembered that, at present, the principal subject of discussion is the desirability of permitting the public to make use of libraries, without barriers or restrictions of any sort. When Edwards was a comparatively young man, the controversy raged round the question of admitting the public to library buildings as a privilege, and all thought of libraries being centres of light and leading, to which students and readers could resort as a matter of absolute right, was still in a vague, unformed condition. So far from readers being considered entitled to handle and examine books, it was a moot point, in the thirties and forties of the last century, whether or not the rough, uncultured democracy should be permitted, even with the most stringent precautions and regulations, to invade the sacred precincts of a library building. The Education Acts, and the work of men like Edwards, have changed all this, and as the library movement grows, so does every method of extending and popularising work among the people meet with more and more acceptance.

Edward Edwards had the spirit of one of the old monks, and lived a good part of his life as a recluse. In some of the circumstances connected with the pathetic incident of his passing away, he may be said to have died like the solitary tenant of a hermit's cell. There is about his life much that reminds one of Francis of Assisi. He is not compared to the founder of the Franciscan Order, because there was about Edwards no voluntary espousal of poverty as a leading principle of life. But poverty he certainly endured, on account of his devotion to the cause of public libraries, and the same spirit which made a St. Francis dwelt in Edwards. It may be doubted whether any man ever displayed a more overwhelming passion for libraries and everything appertaining to them than did Edwards. For fifty years he worked in one way or another for these institutions. His enthusiasm for libraries and the accessibility of books was the one abiding interest of his

life. His books on libraries, and the one on the British Museum, will ever be the quarry, to which all interested in libraries and the institution named will turn for information.

He was a many-sided man, and the deeper it has been possible to enter into the spirit of his life, and the main avenues of his activities, the more complex do they present themselves. He cherished high ideals; but he had not sufficient faith in himself, or discipline of mind, to carry them into full operation. Could he have found some generous soul to lift him above the cankering cares of life, it is likely that he would have given to his day and generation, and the generations to follow, works of erudition which would have been valuable contributions to literature, and assured him a more commanding place among writers of high merit. He had a gift for patient research, and possessed a keen insight into the forms and moods of literary endeavour. His acquaintance with seventeenth-century literature was extensive. Of libraries and the history of libraries his knowledge was unique. His political predilections would have prevented him from handling some subjects with the careful discrimination required by a historian, but where he was on neutral ground he was perfectly safe, and on purely literary questions he would, doubtless, have been able to produce works of mark and reputation, outside his writings on libraries. His versatile mind would have enabled him to write upon almost any literary subject. It is lamentable that a mind such as he had should have been distracted with the constant recurrence of the financial difficulties incident to a limited income. But poverty has ever been the lot of those who wield the pen, and will not bow the knee to Baal, and some of the best work in literature has been done by men and women who felt acutely the dearth of this world's goods. The predominant note in the career of Edwards is one of sadness. In everything this shows itself; but he was too proud to make the prevailing despondency a topic for complaint.

He seemed to lack a vein of humour. During the years of intercourse with like minds to his own in his early manhood, he must have had a disposition possessing a certain amount of magnetism. But in his diaries and letters he appears throughout to be cast in a very serious mould. There is no record of laughter ever having filled his soul. Some psychological moments can only be effectively met by an outward assumption of gaiety. Inwardly the human heart may be far enough from a good, wholesome laugh. But the man or the woman who can, in the midst of cankering care, which no power on earth can remove, indulge in a little laughter, has a resource which is denied to their less favoured brethren. There are many husbands, and many wives, who have to spend their lives in an association that presents no aspects of companionship. To such, the faculty of mirthfulness is a heaven-given boon, which helps many a saddened life over the obstacles that strew the pathway of years. Edwards, so far as can be gleaned, had little either of humour or mirthfulness in his composition.

Another element which he gravely lacked was ambition. He had this quality as it applied to his writings, but he does not seem to have cherished this spirit, so far as it affected his general environment. Reasonable ambition gives a new interest to life. It may even throw a radiance over what would be a dull and commonplace existence. Wisely cultivated, it helps to subdue that species of mental robustness which may become mischievous if not kept within due restraint. What would have happened, had Edwards determined to fill the highest place that the British library world has to award, it is impossible to say. To have discovered that he had steadily set before him such a task would have probably altered the whole of this record. Temperaments exist to which rational ambition becomes a positive safety-valve. The mere discipline exacted, in travelling along the path which leads to the possible realisation of a wholesome ambition, forms an excellent school in which, for a time, to dwell. It cannot

be discovered that, outside his library writings, and his enthusiasm for libraries, he had any ambition, and in this aspect his nature was greatly the poorer.

He was, in the end, a forgotten old man, wrapped up in his books and writings, keenly sensitive to his surroundings, and afflicted with occasional bursts of vehemence and irritability. But there was a softer and a gentler side. It may be doubted whether he ever showed his whole self to any living soul, or if he did, it was to the sister who out-lived him, and there was much dissimilarity between them. His extreme reserve and his great deafness prevented much conversation with him, and he very rarely ever talked about himself. His mother and sisters, and especially the younger sister, were of the same temperament. They were not unsociable, and loved human sympathy, and were deeply touched by the kindly aid of friends, extended to them as the days darkened and the lamp of life grew dim. The letters of his sisters, covering the period from 1854 to 1885, breathe a spirit of family tenderness and solicitude for each other's welfare, very beautiful to see. The last four years of his life brought some little comfort to him, and much disappointment and sorrow. Disappointment, that the cherished work of his later years, a second and revised edition of the *Memoirs of Libraries*, could not be issued ; and sorrow and distress of mind, caused by limited means and increasing debts. He struggled with the fever of an over-active soul, battling against the limitations of its environment. He died in loneliness, and with despair in his heart. The kindness of neighbours, whom he barely knew, provided him with decent burial, and he was laid to rest in an unmarked grave.

It is not an unfair claim that Edwards deserves to be recognised as an educationist of like importance to Froebel and others in Germany, Horace Mann in the United States, and William Edward Forster and Joseph Lancaster in England.

Among the millions of readers who now use public libraries—a large number of whom are in ignorance of

the true history of the origin of the library movement—there should be many to whom the story of the cradle-days of this great educational scheme, and its close connection with Edward Edwards, will appeal with interest.

## CHAPTER II.

### SOME BIOGRAPHICAL DETAILS AND HIS PLACE IN THE PUBLIC LIBRARY MOVEMENT.

But, just as in a campaign there must be generals to command the whole army, officers to head regiments, soldiers to win battles, and also pioneers to open the trenches, sappers to work the mines, engineers to make the escarpments, and fatigue-parties to carry the earth-bags and fascines; so in the agitation of public questions, there must be not only men qualified to be leaders when those questions become ripe for final decision, but also the humble pioneers, working in obscurity, yet helping to create that array of public opinion which gathers force by degrees until it comes to be irresistible.

—EDWARDS, *Manchester Worthies*.

EDWARD EDWARDS was born in London on 14th December, 1812,<sup>1</sup> and was in all probability the eldest of the family. Anthony Turner Edwards, his father, was a builder, and the family lived at 12 Idol Lane, Great Tower Street, up to the time of his father's death. His mother was a native of Hull. Charlotte, the elder of the two sisters, was born in 1814 at Writtle near Chelmsford, Essex. The mother, two sisters and Edward were brought up as Nonconformists, and attended the ministry of the late Dr. Thomas Binney at the old King's Weigh House Chapel. The mother and sisters remained Dissenters until their death. Edwards lamented in later life his Nonconformist training, and became a most ardent Churchman. It is a pleasing trait in the family character, that this difference in religious views never came between the

<sup>1</sup> The date is in Edwards' writing in his Bible on the page where John xxi. occurs. He has written, "Niton 14 Dec. 1884 (my 72nd birthday)". In his autograph copy of Martin's *Handbook of Contemporary Biography* there is the following entry: "Edwards, Edward, English writer, b. in London, 1812;" etc. This entry Edwards has left unaltered, although he has made alterations in several other entries in the book.

mother and sisters, nor son and brother. It is difficult, in the absence of personal or other records, to trace the moulding forces which exercised the most potent influence upon the intellectual development of Edwards. Only by studying his early associates and taking into account what is known of his youthful predilections and pursuits, is it possible to arrive at any conclusion as to his gradual gravitation to a particular line of interests. The most remarkable feature of his career is the fact that, when but twenty-three years of age, he was called before a Parliamentary Committee to give evidence as to improvements in the administration of the British Museum. That a young man, practically unknown, should have been considered sufficiently expert in technical knowledge to advise with grave legislators and librarians of standing, touching improvements in the conduct of a literary, scientific and artistic institution like the British Museum, is a tribute alike to the impression which was made by his pamphlet, and to the wisdom of those who had charge of the inquiry. No doubt the committee were appalled when this comparatively youthful witness appeared, but of this there is no evidence. It is quite certain that Edwards must, from early boyhood, have been a student of the most diligent and earnest kind. He tells us himself that he used the British Museum during 1833-1834 almost daily, and thus it is evident that, shortly after leaving school, he must have embarked upon a course of study calculated to fit him for the splendid work of his more mature years, on behalf of public libraries. At this period he must also have been a prominent member of the Literary and Scientific Institution, whose magazine he helped to conduct, and thus, as hereafter shown, other elements in his mental training were introduced. In another direction his studies also conducted him into the field of historical collaterals.

There had been occasion for him to refer to coins and medals for the purpose of looking up some matters of French history. The compilation of a catalogue of French medals in 1837 was one of his earliest attempts in this

direction, as will be seen from the chronological table in the appendix. That a young man of his age should at that date have been able to do this is significant. Numismatic studies represent a close acquaintance with peoples, countries and history. This cannot be quickly acquired. Whether his father had a collection of coins, and this had given him a taste for these studies, is not clear, but it is more than probable that such was the case. At all events it equipped him, when but twenty-five, with a comprehensive groundwork of knowledge, which gave promise of the future attainments afterwards displayed. Even at this age he seems to have had a wide acquaintance with German and French literature, for he was able to indicate the deficiencies in the English collections of books in these languages, with a minuteness which apparently surprised the authorities of the British Museum, as well as the members of the Commission.

It is an old adage that a man is best known by his companions. By-and-by, as conditions alter, it will be the way in which leisure is spent that will stamp the man. Edwards had several intimate friends who later occupied prominent positions like himself. Edwin Abbott (1808-1882) was head master of the Philological School in Marylebone, London, and an educational writer of distinct merit. His son, the Rev. Edwin A. Abbott, D.D., has become even more distinguished than his celebrated father. He was head master of the City of London School, and has stated that he often heard, in his boyhood, his father speak of Edwards as a man of remarkable ability. Edwin Abbott was a bosom friend of Edwards. His letters addressed to him, which are still in existence, would fill a volume. They afford extremely interesting reading, and give a chatty survey of men, books and events as they presented themselves to the writer. They visited each other to and fro, and the correspondence dating from 1835 has a glow of warmth which is quite refreshing.<sup>1</sup> Un-

<sup>1</sup> Edwards was godfather to one at least of Abbott's children.

fortunately the letters of Edwards for this period have been destroyed. In one of the earliest letters Abbott says, "I hope to see you at five that we may have a little German together". Abbott was a kindly and helpful critic, and his good judgment must often have been of immense service to Edwards. "Believe me," says Abbott on 4th July, 1836, after going minutely into some points in Greek history, "I am not insensible . . . of all your acts of kindness. The world is made up of small things, and a true friendship shows itself in ministering to the peculiar wants of its object." At a later date in the same year Abbott says, "What will Parry say to the time spirit of Whiggism? . . . Do you mean to plead Radicalism?" On 20th November, 1837, Abbott writes:—

... I have no news to tell you except that I am going to be very industrious; the only difficulty being the exact time when I shall begin. If you are in civilised society I shall hope to see you forthwith; if not, for our sakes return without delay lest you should contract a taste for wigwams and cannibalism. . . .

The Parry in question was John Humffreys Parry (1816-1880), at one time engaged at the British Museum, but who became later a serjeant-at-law, and the representative of a distinct school of forensic lore and special pleading. He belonged to the group of Edwards' early friends, and was for some years at Abbott's Philological School. On 17th March, 1837, Parry wrote, "You may be sure that I sympathise cordially in your feelings or regret at the cessation of our delightful meetings in Gloucester Place, and to their renewal I look forward with eagerness. For your own kind notification of open house every Wednesday and Thursday I thank you, and will try to avail myself of the invite." Eight quarto pages represent one letter from Parry, chiefly on the question of copyright in pictures, sculpture and literary productions. Edwards had suggested a new tribunal for copyright cases, and Parry did not quite see eye to eye with him upon the question. On another occasion they had gone together to see Macready, and Parry writes a

warmly eulogistic letter about the acting of that artist. Parry's lectures on the novels of Bulwer Lytton and other subjects figure largely in the letters. On 18th September, 1840, Parry wrote :—

... I read the concluding notice of your book in the *Times*.<sup>1</sup> Depend upon it the writer was prevented from saying all he would have wished to say by the fear of offending the orthodox journal. . . . There was surely covert satire in the note enjoining you to open your eyes and see the unwillingness of the public in London to visit exhibitions of art on the Sabbath. That which would be blasphemous in the metropolis is allowable at Hampton Court. There the portraits of Charles II.'s mistresses may be gazed upon without disturbance of the Christian feeling. . . . We may gaze upon a parson but not upon a picture, we may walk in the parks but not in the galleries of the British Museum. We may attend the teaching of Horne but must not profit by those of Correggio. . . . The second fact which more especially concerns you as an art reformer, is that the officers at the barracks of Canterbury are not allowed to hang pictures in any of their apartments for fear of spoiling the walls, which said walls are painted of the dullest colour which the commanding officer could select by the aid of his peculiarly dull and stolid faculties.

A third associate was George Godwin (1815-1888), the successful architect who laboured zealously to improve the sanitary condition of the dwellings of the poor in town and country. He was a man of lofty ideals, who left his mark upon the architectural work of his time, and his ephemeral writings and numerous lectures contributed largely to educate the public taste in matters of art. He and Edwards were chiefly responsible for the *Literary Union*, described as "a monthly magazine conducted by members of the City of London and Western Literary and Scientific Institutions," which appeared during the year 1835. Edwards had apparently much to do with the general working of this publication, for on 2nd August, 1835, addressed to 47 Leicester Square, Godwin reminds him that his "first step will be . . . to get in as much money as possible from our vagabond subscriptions". One article in this periodical on "Thoughts on the Management of Popular and Scientific Institutions"

<sup>1</sup> *The Fine Arts in England*, etc., mentioned in chapter viii.

bears the stamp of Edwards' work. It was intended to be a magazine for Popular Literary Scientific Institutions and to chronicle their proceedings. The magazine came to grief after the first year, but it did not spoil the friendship between Godwin and Edwards, and the others who had a share in the venture. Godwin's letters are cheery to a marked degree. The playful banter about men and things in general is delightful. These four and others formed a group of young men full of earnest purpose and zeal for the widening of educational facilities in every direction. They had a literary society of their own, known by the name of the Society of Wranglers, in which a fine was exacted as a penalty for non-attendance, so earnest were they all for mutual improvement. Edwards was a leading member of this society. One of the earliest subjects for discussion noted was—"Is the French Revolution attributable more to the writings of the French Encyclopædist than to the privileged classes". A common designation among themselves for the members of this society was that of "Soul-Squeezers". Godwin distributes the phrase freely throughout his letters to Edwards, but never in any sarcastic way. They were a band of young men terribly in earnest, and held definite views about most things. No subject was too dry or cosmopolitan for them to consider. They roamed over the whole range of art, literature and politics, and expressed themselves with a freedom which never seems to have alienated them from each other. Devoted friends, enthusiastic over the respective work that each was trying to do, the circle must have had a material influence in forming the character of each of the members. They met constantly, and their correspondence was voluminous. It was not so much a question with them that the world was out of joint and required putting to rights, as it was one of their individual readiness to help in adjusting things that in their eyes needed readjustment—ready at all times to take part in any helpful movement, and contribute an honest share of work. Every age has had its young men

who dream dreams, and it is well for the generations that such men have been willing to render an unpaid service in the solution of pressing problems. The "Soul-Squeezers" belonged unmistakably to this class, and so far as can be gleaned, Edwards ranked among the most active and alert of the number. The three others named achieved positions of financial success. It is to be regretted that Edwards did not meet with a like fortune. Friend sharpened friend in that group, and Edwards all through his career must have carried mentally and morally the benefits of his intercourse with them.

Other friends or close acquaintances were E. William Wyon, one of the family of engravers at the Royal Mint; John Pye, landscape engraver; John Imray, a near neighbour for some years, and an architect who aided him with the maps of libraries printed in the Parliamentary Report of 1849. In his diary summary for October, 1847, Edwards records that he "began a course of historical reading twice a week and *vivâ voce*, with my friend Imray"; James Macarthur, a New South Wales colonist, with whom Edwards collaborated in a book on that colony, which will be named later; F. Espinasse,<sup>1</sup> a colleague at one time in the British Museum, and afterwards on the staff of a Manchester newspaper; Thomas S. Gowing, who refers in his letters to the circle as "Soul-Squeezers". From all these there are letters existing addressed to Edwards.

Most of these friends shared his desire to see libraries established everywhere, and made as accessible as it was possible to make them. One direct outcome of these regular gatherings was the formation of the Art Union of London in 1837. Mr. Henry Hayward, a brother-in-law of Edwards, was the prime mover, and of this association Edwards acted for a time as honorary secretary.

With Joseph Hume, M.P. (1777-1855), Edwards was on terms of more than passing acquaintanceship. The

<sup>1</sup> In his *Literary Recollections and Sketches* he gives a warm tribute to Edwards, pp. 17-18.

first letter available from Hume was in the autumn of 1838 asking Edwards to call and see him. With Hume, Edwards evidently conversed and corresponded often, upon public questions, and especially such questions as affected art and literature. It may be remarked that Hume rendered good service as a member of Parliament when the question came before the House.

In 1844 Edwards was married to Miss Margaretta Frances Hayward, a Hampstead lady, whose acquaintance he probably made about 1834. She was his senior by nine years, and was about forty-one when the marriage took place. They had no family: a misfortune which Edwards lamented on various occasions, as was but natural in the case of a man who took keen interest in children, and no doubt fully appreciated their value in cementing family ties.

It is not often that a man's life-work so quickly yields results as in the case of Edwards. Within a generation, municipal public libraries have spread themselves on all sides. They all owe their existence mainly to the pioneer labours of this man, and to William Ewart and Joseph Brotherton. The three men presented a strong combination. Whatever public question they might have taken in hand, it is probable that it would have been brought to a satisfactory conclusion. Edwards had the active enthusiasm which enabled him to work patiently, in supplying the energy, for the other workers. Notwithstanding his subsequent conservatism, and his possession of all the prejudices of the scholar, he had an absorbing passion to see libraries made everywhere accessible to the people. There was not an atom of exclusiveness in his disposition so far as books were concerned. Politically, his anti-democratic spirit gave him later a spirit of exclusiveness. But this had no place when public libraries were in question. When the politicians, Ewart and Brotherton, were doing their part of the work, he it was who kept the arsenal furnished with ammunition. His critics fixed upon some weak parts in his statistics, and found fault

with them, but with the larger bearing of the whole subject they did not attempt to deal. Edwards had a clear grasp of the possibilities held out by the establishment of fully equipped public libraries, made available for the use of everybody, with none but the simplest of restrictions. Public libraries were to be the people's universities, to a far larger degree than was ever known in this country, or on the continent. It is very possible that Edwards realised this more fully than the two men who fought the question in the legislature of the nation. There is nothing invidious in stating that in scholarship he was in advance of the two members of the House of Commons especially interested. He represented in himself the double qualification of constant user of the British Museum Library, up to 1839, and afterwards of an experienced assistant in that library. In both capacities he had amassed a wide and intimate knowledge, and each had aided in intensifying his enthusiasm. Ewart and Brotherton were naturally dependent on some such help, for facts and information with which to combat the undercurrent of distrust and ignorance that prevailed in the country and in St. Stephen's, and were pleased to enlist the powerful aid of Edwards, even though he was much younger than either of themselves.

William Ewart (1798-1869) was a typical legislator. He was the only one of the three men who had received a university education. He had travelled extensively and had seen the library facilities of the continent, and longed for his own country to possess equal advantages. He was a well-educated and well-to-do representative of the yeoman class, who have done so much for the consolidation and natural development of our national institutions, and for British liberty. The spirit of true and cautious progress governed his soul. He was no iconoclast, but a patient plodder through the meshes of Parliamentary procedure, and all who have the most casual acquaintance with the promotion of a bill in the House of Commons know well what this means. He

was the friend at Court of the proposed measure, and nothing was more vital to the welfare of the several Acts than the intimate knowledge of what to do, and how to do it, which was possessed by the member for the Dumfries Burghs. It seems to be the case that Ewart's idea of what was possible to be done in the way of providing libraries did not extend to lending departments. Edwards supplied the suggestions which made this element such a wonderful factor in later developments. A multiplication of small British Museums in various parts of the country was, it may be judged, what the political promoters had chiefly in mind. The reformer must be content with progress in easy stages, and it is well that it should be so. None knew this better than Ewart, and his painstaking care in each step of the progress of library legislation was of the greatest moment to the welfare of the measure, as it was to other subjects in which he had taken an active interest. It was from the House of Commons that help was to come for the extension of public libraries. Private benevolence had done much and would do much, but to unify and strengthen the work done it was necessary to have a permissive measure passed by the Houses of Parliament, in order to make the whole scheme possible. The House of Commons has had many such men as William Ewart, but none with a keener instinct, and a more earnest desire to give his support and active help to measures for benefiting the community. His concentration was commendable. Instead of trying to excite an interest in a long series of wearisome questions, he gave his attention to a carefully selected few. More imitators of this course, in the House of Commons, would earn the gratitude of members, and, in some cases, gain converts. The House of Commons has all through its history been misjudged by outsiders. In Ewart's time, as now, it was made up of many varying and opposing elements. In the thirties and on to the sixties a rich member, with a safe and comfortable seat, could afford to take things easy. Ewart resisted this

temptation. The nation owes a vast debt to the Ewart type of legislator. He was practical, attentive, experienced, conciliatory, with an attractive personality, such as could not fail to win supporters. These are the qualities which he brought to bear upon his share of the great task of securing the passing into law of the first of the Libraries Acts, which, whatever the enemies of public libraries may say, have played a great, and are destined to play a still greater, part in national education and wholesome recreation for the people.

Joseph Brotherton (1783-1857) was essentially a man of the people, and he was proud of being the son of a Lancashire manufacturer. Class distinctions ruled supreme in those days. But his simplicity of disposition, enabled the representative of Salford to make a very definite position for himself in the nation's legislature. He belonged to the type to which Cobden and Bright belonged, and he was a useful adherent of this school. He was the typical lay preacher and citizen-representative combined in one person. A quiet force, untiring energy and sustained zeal were his by natural bent of character. His Nonconformist training and sympathies added lustre to his homely qualities. He belonged to a strict sect, but the narrowness of a religious coterie did not affect his broader outlook upon things as they concerned the nation as a whole. He carried conviction when he spoke, and in, what is termed for the want of a better phrase, "lobbying" he must have rendered a special and material service. His scrupulous honesty, and his unflagging interest in whatever subject he took in hand, were so transparent that he commanded respect, and this was at a time when men and boroughs were bought openly without anybody appearing to suffer. There were few men in the House of Commons, of his time, who were in touch with the masses of the workers in manual occupations, but out of these few Brotherton was one. He knew the Lancashire operative from a long experience. Nowhere in the country were there more readers, more hard-headed men with an honest desire

for knowledge, than in the thickly populated districts around Manchester. The place of Salford in the history of the museum and public library movement is important, and Salford gave Brotherton to the House of Commons, and backed up his enthusiasm for libraries for the people with liberal gifts. The Lancashire freeholder of the time could appreciate simple-minded earnestness when he discovered it, and in Brotherton he realised this gift, for he was returned for twenty-four successive years from 1832 to 1857 as Salford's representative. "My riches consist not in the extent of my possessions, but in the fewness of my wants," was a saying of Joseph Brotherton, which has been engraved upon his statue at Salford. Among Edwards' correspondence there is not a single letter from Brotherton, and the references to him in the diaries are few and scant, but there is no doubt about his help having been of material importance. There is an interesting link, in name at least, in the fact that the pamphlet entitled "Public Spirit illustrated in the Life and Designs of Dr. Bray," the founder of parochial libraries, was printed in 1746 for one J. Brotherton. The nation has never realised what it owes to spontaneous and unsparing labour, undertaken with the expectation of no other reward than the consciousness of good service rendered to some noble cause. Love of a cause counts for much, and this dear old Empire of ours is fortunate beyond estimation in the number of men and women who have given of their best unstintingly, for the welfare of the community.

Each of the three men described as associates was able to take a different part in originating a great movement, without asking or interfering with the part played by his colleagues. Each possessed his own special equipment for the work. Less has been heard in the past of Edwards than has been heard of Ewart and Brotherton. This may be owing to Edwards having been a paid public servant at the time of the passing of the Museums Act of 1845 and the Libraries Act of 1850, and it was very possibly

thought unnecessary to bracket such an official definitely with Ewart and Brotherton, as disinterested workers in a public movement. This was not an unreasonable view to take. Members of Parliament are habitually disinclined to give full prominence to the source from whence their information is derived. Everything which is likely to be of use to them is gathered up, with a net having a small mesh, from the painful researches of some intelligent official, and only reappears as original matter, the coinage of the member's own brain. Only a limited experience of the average representative is required to illustrate this tendency on the part of members of Parliament, and indeed of all kinds of public speakers who base their remarks on the hard work of some invisible helper. A brilliant speech in the House and telling work in committee are often made a possibility by the labours of the man who drew up and studied the brief, but the actual author of the brief is rarely ever heard of and much less known. There was nothing in Edwards' life and station which could give him, even for a day, the commanding public position of his two friends. They had from the first a more influential and a larger public. The man who wields the pen works, if there is worth in his work, for the generations who follow. The glamour of the platform is not for him, and he does not covet the possession. More often than not he is poor. Outside the successful manufacturers of fiction, the man of letters in the concrete produces books which are not likely to pay author and publisher in any profuse way. Edwards' work was essentially of this nature. It is more than probable that his early pamphlets of 1836 and later dates were issued solely at his own cost. His lot was not an uncommon one, and has presented itself at every period of the history of all great movements which have struck deep into the well-being of the people. The race of unrewarded student-authors is not yet at an end, and it will be a sorry day for the nation if it ever becomes extinct, even at the sacrifice of a small ransom to ensure its longevity.

Edwards' own claim as to his position as chief pioneer of the movement is made in the preface of the incompletely second edition of the *Memoirs of Libraries*. Those in the library world who received copies of the first volume of this work, printed in 1885, and issued for presentation by the present writer in the autumn of 1901, will notice the following :—

... An enormous amount of new information concerning even the oldest Libraries of Europe, and . . . of America, is now available. And, in addition, more than one hundred new Libraries have, in our own country alone—Colonial as well as Metropolitan,—been founded. Four-fifths at least of these . . . are the results of those "Public Libraries Acts" of 1850, and subsequent years, down to the year of present publication . . . which had their first inception, origin, and real authorship, in the labours (of 1847, 1848, and 1849) of the present Writer—and in his evidence before Parliamentary Committees. . . .<sup>1</sup>

Then a little farther on in the same preface :—

The substance of that "Statistical View" was again given, verbally, to a Select Committee Of the House of Commons Upon Public Libraries, during the writer's five or six several examinations before it in the Sessions of 1849 and 1850. That Committee was appointed, in the first-named Session, on the motion . . . of Mr. William Ewart, and at the solicitation of the present writer, who drew up in English, French, and German (at Mr. Ewart's request) those "Questions on Public Libraries" which, through the medium of the Foreign Office, were presented at every Court throughout the world, to which any British Envoy was accredited. The results were published in several "Appendices" to the various Reports of the Committee from 1849 to 1852 inclusive.<sup>1</sup>

Then once again in the preface :—

The "Library Returns" of 1849-52 . . . contain, that is, in the year 1885—the latest official and general accounts of the progress, and condition, of many Foreign Libraries, which have been anywhere published (in any language) or in any form whatsoever. They were obtained, after some difficulty, by Mr. William Ewart, M.P. (at the instance, and solicitation, of the present writer), through our Ambassadors and Consuls abroad, and were transmitted to the Foreign Office.<sup>1</sup>

Never once does Edwards in his diaries make a strong claim for his share in securing the passing of the Act of

<sup>1</sup> The preface was printed twice, and in the second instance varied slightly from the first, but the general purport is the same.

1850. The entries are simple and matter-of-fact. He was modest and self-forgetful. No man ever yet accomplished any real work for the public good who did not sink self in the task which he had at heart. The true patriot is ever content to remain in seclusion if the end for which he has laboured is gained or furthered even but a little.

It is appropriate, therefore, that his claim to be the chief pioneer of the modern public library movement should be preferred on his behalf, even at this distant date, and when the movement has spread with such encouraging rapidity in all parts of the country.

There are twenty-seven diaries existing which cover the years ranging from 1844 to 1884. The gaps are considerable, and there is only one for the seventies, and this for 1870. The entries throughout are full and interesting, but unfortunately there is not much of a really biographical nature available for use. All diaries which are not written in the first instance for publication contain items of a purely personal nature. These are useful as an index to character and in giving a full insight into a man's true self; but they do not carry the searcher far in his linking together, of a long chain, of biographical facts. Several things are conclusively proved by the diaries. First, the man's intensely religious spirit, which he carried throughout his life. He began life as a Nonconformist, as already mentioned, and ended it as an earnest Episcopalian, with bitter regrets that his early training had been in the folds of dissent. To this early training in dissent, however, he owed whatever of true spirituality there was in his inner religious life. It is not said that he did not add to this in later years, but the groundwork and basis of his faith were laid by the ministration of Dr. Thomas Binney (1798-1874) of the old King's Weigh House Chapel in the heart of the city of London. There was a depth and an earnestness in Dr. Binney's teaching which struck a chord in Edwards' soul that was resonant to the very end of his life. It was a case of mind answering unto mind, and heart unto heart. One of the

earliest entries in the diary for 1844 is of a "solemn and impressive" sermon of the divine named, and amongst the entries in the latest diaries are those where he records the reading of sermons from the same source. Dr. Binney was a born preacher, and had an especial influence in his day upon the minds of young and thoughtful men. His discourses breathed the spirit of the true teacher. His influence was of the nature that grew the more he was known and heard. Wise in his choice of language, earnest in tone, intense in his loyalty to the realities which constituted the inner life, with a firm belief in the character-forming influences of things spiritual, he could not fail to impress deeply a young man of Edwards' mould and leanings. Why Edwards lamented his early religious training is not made very clear. He could have passed through his change in religious views without reproaching the faith and order to which he at one time belonged, and to which he undoubtedly owed the foundations of the intensely religious fervour that was part of his nature. He was so scrupulously honest with himself in other directions, that it is a pity that he did not realise the fact indicated. Among the correspondence are many letters from Dr. Binney, covering a long stretch of years. Throughout them there is a kindly, sympathetic tone. "I shall deem myself happy," said this teacher, in the middle of 1838, "if I ever have an opportunity of doing you any service." The same spirit animates every letter of Dr. Binney to Edwards. Says Edwards on 16th May, 1847, "Heard a most magnificent sermon from Mr. Binney. . . . Without being able to subscribe to all his theology, I carry away impressions from Binney's discourses such as I never experience elsewhere."

Another mind which had a far-reaching influence on Edwards was that of William Johnson Fox (1786-1864), the preacher and radical. The work of this earnest reformer is almost forgotten except by the older politicians of to-day. He was in his full vigour in the forties and preached and lectured regularly at South Place Chapel and Institute,

Finsbury. His work is another example of the transient nature of the spoken word. Art and literature are the two things in life which have permanence. The impassioned utterances of the orator pass away with his age. Fox was one of the soul-inspiring group of the Anti-corn Law agitation, and ranked next to Cobden and Bright. Edwards rarely missed a Sunday morning at South Place, and records with a fine glow the subject of Fox's discourse. Fox was a reformer of the purest brand. He combined with a striking personality, a warmth and an enthusiasm of disposition. He was a leader of men and used his power rightly and with discretion. As a member of Parliament he was distinctly useful in bringing about those early reform bills so vital in their influence upon all that has since followed in their train. If Fox was announced to speak, and Edwards could be present to hear him, he was sure to be there. The strong democratic sympathy in Edwards' mind, which prevailed in his early manhood, was of Fox's cultivation, if not of his actual planting. It is somewhat inconsistent that Edwards should have so completely hurled out of his mind all respect for what he looked upon as extreme politics, though as regards libraries his ideas were not only democratic, but, for the period in which he lived, almost socialistic. Changes in religious and political opinions come to most men. The lapse of years scarcely leaves any one untouched in this respect. But it is possible to make a change and still carry with it a respect for whatever is good and true in the party or the views thus discarded. Edwards need not have spoken and written so strongly against the political and religious bodies with which in his early years he had sympathy. He owed more to these sections than he would perhaps have been willing to acknowledge. That both Binney and Fox should have had considerable influence on Edwards' mind seems perhaps a contradiction. One may have been a corrective of the other. The spiritual in the teaching of Binney may have served to modify the ethical

and political in Fox's discourses. The mind that cannot sift from the written or spoken thought what the judgment and mature reflection can accept, is a mind which has only partially progressed on the road to a trustworthy formation of opinions.

Another thing made clear in his diaries is the minute way in which he recorded his income and expenditure. With the exception of the last, every diary contains a full statement of each year's cash account. This is all the more commendable in him, as he had some small extravagances which must now and again have been a sore trial to him. He liked to be well dressed, and had a weakness for frilled shirts long after they had ceased to be fashionable. He loved a good dinner and never hesitated to stay at the best hotel: and notes his gifts to the attendants. A few pence spent in postage is duly entered, and be the outlay small or considerable, all is recorded. This habit must, in itself, have saved him from foolishly running into debt, and there is an indication that he had a weakness in this direction, but one which was kept manifestly under restraint. Whenever he had money he paid it away with a free hand. Another habit clearly shown is that of his voracious appetite for reading. He read all and everything pretty nearly which came in his way. It is books, books, from the first page of the diaries to the end. He was a veritable Macaulay on a smaller scale in this respect. His retentiveness for what he read never forsook him. His laborious industry in whatever he undertook was marvellous. No matter what was the subject upon which he had to write he searched every possible source for facts and information, and stored these in note-books, or on slips of paper for reference. Piles of these still exist, and heaps must have been destroyed during the lapse of years.

He was of a forgiving disposition, loved children, and was grateful to those who helped him and ministered to him. He lived his life, chequered as it was, like an

anchorite of bygone days. His mother, sisters and himself all through their lives transformed reticence into a fine art. His loneliness saddened his life, drove him within himself, and caused him to draw the fullest comfort from his Bible and books of devotion. These he perused and marked with a devoutness that displayed his religious spirit, although it must be acknowledged that formalism played an important part in this feeling.

He was a man of strong contrasts, and this makes his life well worth careful study. Breadth in religious and political views in early life was followed by narrowness in later years. Arrogance and dictatorial tendencies gave place afterwards to a bearing which was almost servile. Pride and haughtiness of spirit in youth became humbled and chastened at the last. Quarrelsome with his best friends, he was tenderness itself to his mother and sisters. Loving children and Mother Nature with a beautiful intensity; yet raspy and dogmatical. Utterly fearless in the expression of his opinion, but not always willing to listen to the opinions of others. Honest to a high degree in purpose and motive himself, and yet sometimes declining to see these qualities in others. Sweet and tender in the references to his wife after her death: and possibly not altogether happy during her lifetime. Longing for human sympathy: yet living his life alone. Shadowed and saddened by limited means; but too proud to make his needs known. A strong man with great ideas; but with some of the best in him strangled by a giant which he could not subdue until it was too late for the subjugation to be of service to him. One aspiration, one thought, one longing remains unclouded and unchanged to the end, and that was his love for libraries, and for their universal extension in every direction. In that and what he did for these institutions, his work will live long in the years to come.

On the 21st November, 1847, he lost his father after a very brief illness. The entry in his diary reads:—

To I(dol) L(ane) about 12. Found dear F(ather) quite sensible—he recognised me and pressed my hand, but was too ill to speak more than a word or two at a time, and these only in reply to a question as to his feeling pains or thirst, etc. I remained in his room—except for an hour or two—from noon till 25 minutes before 12 at night, when he, very peacefully, expired: and most truly in his case it may be said, *in the sure and certain hope of a joyful resurrection*—exchanging his last Sabbath on earth for an eternal Sabbath in Heaven. May my own departure, and the departure of all I love, in God's good time, be as happy as was his. My dearest mother bore up with great fortitude and resignation, which nothing could have given her but the firm faith in the blessed realities of the world to come. Dear Charlotte too was, happily, sustained. Dear Elizabeth is confined to her bed with severe illness. . . .

All that a son could do was done by him. He at once took upon himself the funeral arrangements, and did his best to unravel the somewhat tangled condition in which his father's affairs were left. The estate was valued for probate at something under £300. His mother and sisters, Charlotte and Elizabeth Margaret, became his tender care. Whatever roughness there was in his bearing towards others, to his mother and sisters there was always tenderness and kindly solicitude. And this he retained to the end of his life, as will be seen. The brightest beam in this man's personal character is his love for the near and dear relatives named. It shines clear all through his life, and never became dimmed.

## CHAPTER III.

### EARLY PAMPHLETS ON LIBRARY AND EDUCATIONAL QUESTIONS, AND HIS EVIDENCE BEFORE THE PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEE ON THE BRITISH MUSEUM, 1836.

In two particulars, more especially, our great National Museum stands distinguished among institutions of its kind. The collections which compose it extend over a wider range than that covered by any other public establishment having a like purpose. And . . . those collections are also far more conspicuously indebted to the liberality of individual benefactors.

—*Lives of the Founders of the British Museum.*

It was ordered by Parliament on 27th March, 1835, that a Select Committee be appointed to inquire into the condition, management and affairs of the British Museum. On this committee were Mr. Hawes, Mr. Ewart, Lord Stanley, Lord John Russell, Lord Dalmeny and others. The blue book containing the report of the committee extends to over six hundred pages, and this, with the report of the following year, must ever be an important link in the development and general history of this great national institution. Edwards was not called before the committee of 1835, but he embodied his views of the evidence given before it in a pamphlet of remarkable ability, addressed to Mr. Benjamin (afterwards Sir Benjamin) Hawes (1797-1862), M.P. for Lambeth, and Under-Secretary for War. The appointment of the committee was mainly due to the efforts of Mr. Hawes, but what chiefly led up to it were some complaints respecting the administration which were made by a discharged servant.<sup>1</sup> This, however, occupied but a small part of the inquiry.

On 14th December, 1835, Mr. B. Hawes wrote to Edwards: —

<sup>1</sup> Fagan's *Life of Sir A. Panizzi*, vol. i., p. 151.

I have only just finished reading your very valuable paper on the Museum. I hope you will be able to give evidence on the subject if the committee is revived, which I do not doubt will be the case. It will afford me great pleasure to see you some morning if you can favour me with a call. When I get the evidence out I hope you will be able to read it and give me your opinion on it. Your MS. I presume I may keep for the present, and I must say you are only the third person who has rendered me any essential service. Indeed I fear when the evidence comes out it will shew how much I stood in need of assistance. . . .

On 28th December, 1835, Mr. Hawes wrote to Edwards to ask, "Does the evening suit you when we could discuss the question over a cup of tea?" It is clear from this that they must have gone minutely over the ground traversed in the pamphlet, before it was issued to the public.

This pamphlet, entitled "Remarks on the 'Minutes of Evidence' taken before the Select Committee on the British Museum," is dated 15th February, 1836, and must have come as a surprise to the British Museum authorities. Its author was, so far as can be traced to-day, unknown, and seems to have burst suddenly into some prominence. To the members of the committee the criticisms of the evidence given before them in 1835 must have been somewhat startling. Even on the part of a practised hand it would have been a bold step, but to come from an unknown stripling it must have been doubly so. The letter fills seventy-six pages of an octavo pamphlet. He leads off by saying that "an enquiry into the condition, management and affairs of the British Museum has been long called for. Loud and frequent have been the complaints of its narrow accessibility, of the extremely imperfect state of its collections—of its want of adaptation to the progressive changes of science in various departments; and in general of an inaction which is alleged to have characterised its management of late years, notwithstanding a very observable increase of the just demands of the public upon it." This is a courageous beginning, and he supports his views with a long extract from the *Memoir of Sir Humphry Davy* by his brother Dr. John Davy, which had then recently been published. This

extract is decidedly adverse to the then management of the Museum.

"Our national establishment, the British Museum," said Sir Humphry, "is unworthy of a great people. . . . In every part of the metropolis people are crying out for knowledge; they are searching for her even in corners and bye ways: and such is their desire for her, that they are disposed to seize her by illegitimate means, if they cannot obtain her by fair and just ones." Sir Humphry was in his day one of the official trustees, and he pressed upon the notice of his colleagues certain necessary changes.

"It is so much easier to complain than to point out means of improvement," remarks Edwards; and hence the reason for the committee continuing their inquiry during another year. The evidence given in 1835 "taken altogether prove incontestably that whatever may be our other claims to the distinction—we have not the shadow of pretension to be considered the first nation of Europe in respect to the condition, organisation or management of our literary and scientific establishments". With the evidence of Sir Henry Ellis (1777-1869), then the chief of the Museum, he is merciless, and indeed no public official ever laid himself open to criticism to a greater extent than did the one just named. His answers were lame, incomplete and in some instances foolish. With the public who might visit the Museum he was unsympathetic. "The vulgar class would crowd into the Museum," if that institution were open during the public holidays of Christmas, Easter and Whitsuntide. Other answers are quoted where references were made to sailors from the dockyards who might bring undesirable companions with them, and when pressed, he said he had not traced whether they came from the dockyards, but people coming at such (holiday) times "would be of a very low description".

Some of the under-officials gave replies of a directly opposite nature to similar questions, and Edwards remarks

that "it is worthy of observation that in this instance precisely as we descend the scale of official authority, we seem to find a more catholic perception of the objects of the Museum. A dread of the inroad of the vulgar class (meaning apparently the manual labour classes in general) does not seem to dwell in any breast of less dignity than that of a principal librarian."

Here is the germ of the first principle enunciated by Edwards—unrestricted access of the public to their own literary, artistic and scientific collections, in the institutions supported out of public monies.

"The chief object of the Museum," said the Keeper of the Department of Natural History, "was to stimulate the exertions of the unlearned." Edwards enlarged upon this and urges that the same end would be most "effectually attained by interesting the many in the pursuits of the few".

All through the pamphlet Edwards is warm in his praise of the urbanity and readiness on the part of the general officials to afford all the information in their power, compatible with existing regulations and circumstances.

He says that as a frequent visitor of the Museum he had always found that the attendants sought to make the Museum useful.

The Museum Library, urged the Rev. J. Forshall (Q. 1288), was a library of research and not a library of education. Edwards said that he differed from this view, but impeached his theory rather than the effects of that theory. "However extensively it may become the means of diffusing knowledge, it can never be the less able to help those who aim at extending knowledge."

He then proceeds to review the leading features of the condition and management of each of the existing four departments of the Museum, and begins with the library. This he divides under four heads: (1) Accessibility; (2) Supply of books; (3) State of catalogues; and (4) Department of organisation. He attacks the 10 A.M. to 4 P.M. time then in vogue throughout the year. The evidence

given upon this point is surveyed at length. He advocated the opening of the library during the evening, and pressed this with a vigour characteristic of him. It required more than fifty years to achieve this end even in a modified form, but it is satisfactory to note that Edwards was among the first to suggest the evening opening during the winter months. That it was not a great success when tried is not to the point, for it must not be forgotten that, in the interval, good reference libraries in various parts of the metropolis, which were open in the evening, had been established. Sir Henry Ellis had a good deal to say about the convenience of "men of research". "The main purpose of a national library is to assist research and to aid those who were more professionally devoted to knowledge." Edwards deals sarcastically with Ellis' sneer, which comes in this section, that circulating libraries would provide most of the books which merchants' clerks would want:—

It is not merely to open the library to persons who, from the engrossing nature of their engagements of business, are at present utterly excluded from it, but it is also that the library may be made . . . a direct agent in some degree in the work of national education. Let not any one be alarmed lest something very theoretical or very revolutionary should be proposed. I merely suggest that the library should be opened to a class of men quite shut out from it by its present regulations—I mean schoolmasters.

The reader will remember that it is the year 1836 which is under review. He urged the construction of a separate room to be open daily from 6 until 11 P.M., throughout the year, during which hours readers could be furnished with such books as they may have previously requisitioned by notice in writing.

He then deals with the supply of books and begins by calling attention to the then "exceedingly defective state" of the library in this department, and suggests remedies for supplying these defects. "That it is of national importance," he urges, "there should be public libraries, wherein a copy of every published book may be found, will hardly be denied." The copyright law of that time, which con-

ferred upon eleven libraries the right of receiving copies of new books, is dealt with by him, and he carefully surveys the working of that part of the Act. The whole history of British copyright law is of so complex a nature that it is not possible to enter upon it here. But it is obvious that Edwards had familiarised himself with the various Acts and had formed definite, and, for the time, advanced opinions upon the question.

The question of catalogues is, he says, the most important topic as far as the library of the Museum is concerned. He quotes the maxim that "as are the catalogues of a library, so will be its utility".

The story of the catalogues of the British Museum Library is a long one. Its full history has yet to be written, and now that the catalogue is completed, possibly the details of its conception and compilation will be written. When this is done, and if justice is rendered, Edwards will be entitled to recognition, if only for his invaluable practical suggestions. Many pages in this pamphlet are devoted to the catalogue question. The criticisms were clear and definite, and, if on no other ground, Edwards earned the gratitude of all users and lovers of the British Museum Library for the persistency with which he pressed this matter forward. The battle of the catalogues is not, however, for present discussion.

Departmental Organisation is next treated. Edwards' attack on the miserable salaries paid at the Museum at that time must have cheered not a few hearts among the officials. The principal librarian had then £500 a year. As joint secretary to the Society of Antiquaries he received 150 guineas a year, and Sir Henry Ellis added that this outside position and emoluments enabled him to be principal librarian of the British Museum. The Rev. Mr. Baber, who criticised Edwards' pamphlet, had £440 a year. He was a very able man, and probably in his heart did not greatly differ from Edwards respecting the deficiencies of the collection. He had himself been to Germany to buy the Moll Library. At that time he

held a living in Cambridgeshire of the gross value of £900 a year. These particulars are given to show the nature of the abuses that Edwards felt it his duty to attack. He asks, "Ought not the salary of the keeper of a department in the British Museum to be made sufficient in itself?" without supplementing it by outside appointments. Edwards pressed this home with a fulness which can scarcely have failed to help on the betterment in stipends which followed not very long afterwards. It should be kept in mind that the apparently inadequate salaries of the Museum officers were largely supplemented by the apartments which they enjoyed rent free in Montague House. He sums up his pamphlet by reiterating that he has tried to show:—

1. That as respects accessibility, a large number of persons highly fit to make good use of a great public library are by the present regulations entirely excluded from it, and that it is quite possible so to alter those regulations, as to remove this evil without creating any other.
2. That as respects supply of books, there are very serious deficiencies, which certainly ought to be, and may be, lessened: and that there is a law which, because it imposes a partial tax, and does not attain its avowed object ought immediately to be reconsidered.
3. That as regards state of catalogues, there are at present, such serious defects, as greatly to impair the usefulness of the library: defects which indicate neglect on the part of the governing body, and call loudly for immediate and efficient reformation; and
4. That as regards Departmental Organisation, there is need for more efficient responsibility, of better division of labour, and of increase in the salaries of the officers and assistants.

He then goes on to discuss the two departments of Antiquities and Natural History, and the general constitution of the Museum government. In the first he said "were huddled together zoology, botany and mineralogy, with their immediate subdivisions, all in a single department, with a single head, yet presenting the while many of the evils of utter isolation. In the second, the extensive collections of ancient marbles, of coins and medals, and of prints, have again but one responsible keeper." Everywhere, he argued, there was great want of effective

assistants and of division of labour; very imperfect and unequal collections; extremely defective classification and description; and a general absence of anything like harmony of purpose in the whole. And all this notwithstanding the expenditure of nearly a million and a quarter of the public money in addition to the bequests and benefactions. "Surely this need not last for ever?" he passionately asks, and refers to his "Heads of Inquiry" which forms a long appendix to his letter. Before reaching this appendix, he turns to the question whether it was desirable to open the Museum collections on Sundays. He does not argue the subject with any personal relish. But he was compelled to look at it, as so many people have been compelled to look at it, on the ground of public utility and from the standpoint of those having little leisure. Idleness, listlessness, drunkenness and other vices were more apparent then than now, and called imperatively for some antidote. "How may that day, which when made the especial day of man's better part, of his mind and soul . . . be rescued from the stain of ministering to vice and crime?" The day ministered to these evils, he argued, because it is a day without employment. He proceeds to look at the question in a dispassionate and reasonable way.

The whole of the appendix is about two-thirds as long as the main letter. His suggestions for improvements are put forward clearly and logically. "The utmost possible realisation of the great national purposes for which the British Museum was originally founded" is what he promises to keep strictly in view. He takes under survey the following:—

The Departments respectively of 1. Manuscripts; 2. Printed Books; 3. Antiquities; 4. Natural History; 5. Of the Reading Room; 6. Museum publications; 7. Buildings; 8. General Accommodation of the public; 9. Of the Government of the Museum in its I. Departmental Organisation; II. Managing or Directing Board; III. Ultimate Control; 10. Of the Means by which Government both legislative and executive may best promote the objects of the Museum; 11. Of suggested improvements in general.

His discussion of these points is very pertinent and minute. All through he displays a grasp of the question in all its bearings which is marvellous, and his suggestions have a practical bearing. It should not be overlooked that this appeal for our great national institution was written sixty-six years ago. Further, that most of the improvements which he then suggested have been effected. It is not claimed that his pamphlet led to the changes being made, but it is reasonable to suppose that his suggestions in that direction, put forward in the way they came before the public, were influential forces among those which led to the alterations being ultimately made. The pamphlet was certainly the precursor of Panizzi's memorable report of 1845, which caused the grant for purchases to be raised to £10,000.

“Is it expedient that the officers be interdicted from forming private collections of objects similar to those under their respective charge?” he asks. This was a minor point, but one of importance. In a postscript to the Appendix, which Edwards apparently added in 1839, he quotes the report of the Select Committee reappointed in July, 1836, which embodied much that he had put forward.

The division of departments he presses home with persistency. Now that this has been done, the public have little conception of the confusion and incompleteness that existed before this was effected.

Only a limited portion of the entire pamphlet has been reviewed, but it will serve to illustrate the scope and character of Edwards' appeal on behalf of this great national institution. As being his first-known written effort on behalf of public libraries, it is interesting. It represents some of the foundation of his later work. He strikes out with all the vigour of youth, and it was a bold step on his part to criticise so vigorously the administration of the British Museum. The present generation live in the midst of library and museum advantages. It should not be forgotten how these facilities have been won, nor who have helped to secure them. This is why

so much space has been devoted to this letter of 1836, and the appendix dated from Niton, Isle of Wight, in 1839.

Even at this early date Edwards was an industrious pamphleteer. His next pamphlet is a sixteen-page octavo, entitled "Remarks on the Ministerial Plan of a Central University Examining Board," dated 29th February, 1836. The agitation for a Central University for London is of old standing, and it was many years before it became an accomplished object. The treatment by the British Government of educational questions and all matters affecting them, through a long period of years, is not by any means exhilarating reading. An early sentence in this pamphlet refers to this difficulty in obtaining attention to educational questions. "The Government had," he says, "for the time being indeed, occasionally rendered a reluctant assistance, when it had been, as it were, compelled to do so: but the question with it was never, 'how may the interests of science be most promoted,' but 'with how small a concession to public opinion, can we escape for the present,' never, 'in what way can we best advance the education of the people,' but 'with how little can we satisfy this or that other body of men'." The Government in power in 1836 had after nearly five years of petitioning come forward with a larger scheme than had been suggested by the petitioners. But in the midst of much expectation that had been raised, the Government was accused of tergiversation and direct breach of engagement in substituting the general charter for the particular one. The governing body of the London University were up in arms. If the granting of degrees to all and sundry who satisfied the examiners became an established practice, the very props of the State would surely fall. Dissenters would be among the first to secure these degrees, and anything then might happen to imperil the best interests of the State. The struggle was intense. Feeling among educationists ran high; and Edwards' pamphlet was a temperate and powerful appeal for the

general charter. Brought up in a liberal, religious faith, his sympathies were on those grounds for the larger charter. Not a word, however, of bitterness appears at the exclusiveness then existing. He argues from the standpoint of public utility, and the general good of the entire community. The charge against the Government of breach of faith was paltry. In the spring of 1836 Lord John Russell, in the course of his speech in support of the motion, stated that the late Government and Lord Brougham were earnestly occupied in considering first, whether it was possible to obtain the consent of the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge that Protestant Dissenters might study and take their degrees in them; secondly, whether a charter given to the University of London should enable Protestant Dissenters to take their degrees there; and thirdly, whether any other and larger plan might be devised to meet the difficulties which presented themselves on this question, and to facilitate the entrance of Dissenters for the obtaining of degrees, either into the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge, or other places.

The whole question at issue is here in a nutshell. It may be ancient history now, but the state of educational affairs in 1836, and Edwards' part in them, is being discussed. The governors of the London University had stated that they desired no exclusive privileges, but all the same an influential section fought vigorously for the particular charter. Edwards probes this fact in the pamphlet. "To talk," he says, "of an unfair and indiscriminate and unlimited issue of degrees because the Examining Board would have had to receive candidates from all parts of the Kingdom without limitation, was an absurdity." He looks at this statement that the tendency would be in the direction of the granting of indiscriminate and unlimited degrees, and then says the real question was "whether the proposed central university board, *open to all*," (the italics are his) "would or would not have been a greater public benefit, than

the grant of a degree-conferring charter to the London University or College in particular, or to that and a certain number of other colleges in particular, and to them only". Was the door to the earning of degrees to be kept narrow as it then was, or was it to be made wider, was the question. The supposed dangers of the Examining Board being too easily satisfied were puerile. What all true friends of education desired with regard to diplomas was that degrees should truly represent certain positive acquirements, or general ability, and should be obtainable by all, without exception, possessed of those requirements or that ability in what way soever attained. "To require more than this," said Edwards, "is quite as absurd as it is tyrannical. It is as injurious to the persons and places favoured, as to those excluded. For so long as a factitious advantage . . . is allowed to form part of a qualification for a degree, that factitious advantage is . . . a deduction from the real knowledge represented or intended to be represented by that degree." "May not this too be asserted solely on the ground, that every man *ought* to have within his reach the means of obtaining a degree, if he have acquired the knowledge a degree professes to represent, whether the place wherein he acquired that knowledge shall have been a cloistered college, a populous city, or a secluded village ?"

This is the keynote which rings through all Edwards' work. A vigorous Conservative in later life, never once does he falter in his grasp of the principle that education and library facilities are not the exclusive prerogative of the rich, but the birthright of the many.

"The great curse," says Edwards, "of this country is bit-by-bit legislation—an everlasting attempt to mutilate every great principle or public interest, in order to adapt it to what are supposed to be the particular interests of this or that body, this or that little party of men—an attempt not infrequently made in so clumsy a manner as really to satisfy nobody: the public at large, however, always paying the expense." How many workers in

movements for the public good have said this? And yet, much could be put forward in favour of this slow and piecemeal legislation. There are many interests represented in the nation, and it is only fair that these varied and conflicting interests should be taken into account. But in its treatment of questions affecting national education, Parliament has always been more or less indifferent. The supposed interests or privileges of the few have in far too many instances been placed against the welfare of the whole nation. In the closing sentence of the pamphlet proper, Edwards says that this narrow view of education, taken by the country's representatives, has "struck at the very root of the energies which require the freest and the fullest culture, in order to fit them to conflict with the evil results of that very influence as discovered in the concerns of everyday life".

A change took place in 1836 when the London University received a charter as University College, and at the same time by another charter London University was established—not a building for teaching, but a body of persons empowered to examine candidates and confer degrees. Edwards' part in the struggle may not have been a large one, but at all events his pamphlet, as the work of an earnest young man, with unbounded enthusiasm for the widening and improving of educational facilities in every direction, cannot have failed in proving more influential than it is possible at the present time to gauge.

On 11th February, 1836, Parliament ordered that a second Select Committee on the affairs of the British Museum be appointed. On 2nd June, 1836, Edward Edwards was examined. Before him there had been some forty-eight witnesses. The present occasion is not for the purpose of surveying the history of this great national institution, though the whole evidence given before the committee is of a deeply interesting nature.

In the interim between the committee of 1835 and that of the following year, Edwards had printed and issued

his letter addressed to Mr. Hawes which has already been described.

As a direct result of this pamphlet he was on 2nd June, 1836, called before the committee, and on the 20th of the same month there is a letter from Hawes asking Edwards to call upon him. Edwards gave in his pamphlet, as has been already seen, a statement of the deficiencies of the library. The previous witness at the inquiry, the Rev. H. H. Baber, had referred to the pamphlet, and questioned some of the statements made. Edwards stated that there were none of Goethe's works in the Museum Library later than 1819, except the Correspondence with Zelter, and this was admitted. Other works of German literature had been purchased for the library, but were not catalogued. Wieland's works were referred to, and the witness gave a list of the books of this writer which were in the library. Edwards in the pamphlet further stated that there was no edition of Crevier's *Histoire des Empereurs* except Mill's translation. In the King's catalogue, said the witness, he would have found an entry of the splendid edition of that work, printed in 1756. "These errors," it was suggested to the witness, "naturally arise from the imperfect state of the catalogue?" "No," was the answer, "from the haste with which Mr. Edwards probably wrote his book. The King's catalogue is perfect. It was printed before 1820 and these works existed in it before that time." The witness admitted that the catalogues were in a confused and imperfect state.

Mr. Edwards said, with regard to Mr. Baber's evidence, that he instanced in his pamphlet about sixteen German authors of considerable note whose works were not in the British Museum Library, and of these sixteen, two only were referred to by Mr. Baber. He stated that he had prepared four lists as examples of deficiencies in the Museum Library, and these lists he then handed to the committee. The first is a list of German books, and deals with the works of twenty-one German authors, and included Goethe, Kant, Fichte, Niebuhr, Heine and others. The

second list dealt with French literature. Of the works of Guizot and Comte all were wanting. The third list dealt with books published on the continent dealing with history, and embraces a number of important books. Of fifty-three books in this category, published in three months, four only were in the Museum. List IV. was of books on architecture. Some are indicated as being in the King's Library. Questioned (Q. 4739) as to how he obtained his dates on the third list, he said that he compiled lists from *Quarterly Reviews* of all the principal books published on the continent, and then compared these with the alphabetical catalogues: first those of the general series of books, and secondly, those of the royal library. Question 4742 was, "Assuming Mr. Baber's statement to be a correct statement, can you account for your error in any way?" His answer was: "The errors which have been stated are two. The first relates to the works of Goethe. I think Mr. Baber's correction will only apply to a series of twenty volumes, published at Tübingen in 1819, and that all the works of that author since that date are really not in the Museum at present, or, at least, not in the catalogues. The second example, that of Wieland, would appear to be an error, arising from the circumstance of having several catalogues to look at under the same alphabetical arrangement."

The next answer is a rather important one, and turns so materially on the question of cataloguing, according to the methods then adopted at the Museum, and the delay in obtaining books, that it had better be given as it stands in the blue book:—

There is a great uncertainty as to that point, which increases the trouble of searching the catalogues. As mention has been made . . . by Mr. Baber of an intention to place in the reading-room a transcript of the alphabetical catalogues, I wish to make a general remark or two upon them. I doubt not those catalogues will be revised, but it is important that some easily intelligible plan should be followed in that revision. It seems to me that the great difficulties of research in the reading-room of the British Museum are two-fold, and arise, first, from the want of classed catalogues: and secondly, from the defects of the

present alphabetical catalogues, both in plan and actual condition. As to the first, the difficulties occasioned by the want of a general classed catalogue, they have, I think, been already so fully and convincingly stated to the Committee by former witnesses, that it would be wasting its time to go over them again: but having myself experienced the extreme want of such a catalogue during the last two years, I would make one remark in further illustration of the subject, and in reference to a work which has been already alluded to this morning, Watt's *Bibliotheca Britannica*. I think a statement of the nature of the alternative to which a reader resorts in the absence of a classed catalogue, will show the necessity of some immediate improvement. Suppose a person should want to know what books there are in the British Museum on the subject of "Tithes," the only course he can at present pursue, is, to take Watt's fourth volume, and turning to "Tithes," thence extract all the titles of books given. Suppose there be 20 titles, he must then, by the help of certain numerals affixed to those titles, have recourse to Vols. I. and II. to find, one by one, the names of the authors of those 20 works: having made a list of them, he may then refer to the alphabetical catalogues of the general series of books in the Museum, having, probably to consult a separate volume for every book, and then make a second and similar reference to the catalogue of the Royal Library. With respect to such books as are not found in either, there will be no certainty whether or not they are in the Museum, without reference to the yearly addenda lists, of which there are seven or eight, because some works given in those lists, are not to be found in the general catalogues. I have myself written for books which had been two or three years in the Museum at the time of application without obtaining them: because their titles were not in the general catalogues, although I have afterwards, in searching the yearly lists for other purposes, casually found such titles in them; this was, I remember, the case among others, with Sir F. Palgrave's *Rise and Progress of the English Commonwealth*, received in the library in 1832, but which I could not get in 1835. With one general classed catalogue, such accidents as these would not be likely to occur. The difficulty of reference is further increased by the want of a clear arrangement of those works in the library of the British Museum which are anonymous.

The methods of entering anonymous works were next inquired into, and he pointed out defects. Mr. Baber had said that two French books stated by Edwards as not being in the library, were there. Said Edwards, "I can only account for that in the same way. I used the best research that I could, and I had no doubt till this morning of the correctness of all those statements. But there is very great difficulty. I devoted several mornings to it, and

I think I must have consulted from 45 to 50 volumes of catalogue." "You are a German scholar?" he was asked. "I am a reader of German," he answered, and a question turned on that branch of literature. Then there was a question as to how long he had frequented the reading-room: and he said for above two years he had visited it almost daily. In 1836, at the time of this evidence, he was twenty-three years of age. This gives a full half-century of the closest touch and liveliest activity in connection with public libraries, from then till the time of his death.

He was then asked, "Have you generally found facilities in obtaining what you wanted?" He replied, "As far as the present regulations permit of facilities being afforded, and as far as the officers and attendants are concerned, I have met with every facility: but I certainly do think, that in respect of the regulations, much greater facilities might be afforded to readers".

Question 4752 is important as showing what was then forming itself in Edwards' mind as to accessibility in libraries.

He was asked to state some of his views on this point and said:—

It appears to me, that chiefly in three respects the facilities for readers might be increased without any difficulty. In the first place, the present hours are very inconvenient, they are very confined, and necessarily have the effect of shutting out many persons altogether. I have been enabled for some time to frequent the Museum, in the present hours, but I cannot expect to do so constantly for a much longer period, and unless the hours are extended, I shall be precluded from continuing to consult the Museum. It seems to me, that it would not be difficult to increase the time, both in the morning and in the evening, by opening the Museum at eight o'clock instead of ten, and by extending the time in the evening, probably till eight o'clock, provided an increased number of attendants were furnished. I would also say that I cordially concur in the recommendation of Sir Harris Nicolas, for the establishment of an evening reading-room. I think that would open the Museum to many persons who are quite precluded from it at present, persons who would make a very good use of it, not only for themselves, but for the public; and that view has been supported by some petitions, especially a petition from schoolmasters, already presented to the House, praying for extension of hours. The

second respect in which it appears to me that the facilities might be increased, would be by a better provision for furnishing to the Museum, foreign literature regularly, and a better provision for collecting all the works of English authors. With respect to foreign books, it should not be done merely on the casual mention of a particular work, but it should be done, I conceive, as a matter of course. The third respect, in which I would suggest that the facilities might be increased, is with reference to catalogues. I think it would be a great convenience, if a classed catalogue were immediately furnished to the reading-room, to such an extent as the progress already made in the work which was described to the Committee by the last witness, will permit of, together with an alphabetical index of the authors' names.

This would be more useful, he argued, than the bare alphabetical catalogue: and he added that he had lost many days in useless searches for want of such a catalogue. He urged also that the yearly addenda lists should be published for sale. The answers following referred to the limited space for readers available in the reading-room then existing, and he suggested the attendance of a librarian in the reading-room to give assistance to readers when desired. "Would it not be considered rather below the situation of a gentleman of sufficient eminence to fill the situation of librarian, if he were compelled to give attendance in the reading-room?" And he replied that he did not think it should be so considered, and that it was a frequent practice on the continent, and it was so in the Museum itself formerly. A question applying to the cataloguing of manuscripts followed. He then put in a list of books, published during seven months, whose authors' names came under the first three letters of the alphabet, and within those limitations he found forty-eight works wanting in the Museum, and two questions were based on this defect. He then put in a list of books giving the deficiencies in the library of German books of history, and referred to in Thirlwall's *History of Greece*, the first volume of which had just then been issued. The last of his answers displays the man's literary spirit, and it is important as showing the wide grasp and alert intelligence which he displayed at this early date. The

chairman asked him if he had any further observations to offer.

With reference to the printed books, I believe the three points already enumerated, *viz.*, extension of hours and provision of evening reading-room; publication in faculties of a general classed catalogue of the whole collection; and better supply of foreign literature; together with a revision of the clause in the copyright act, will embrace the chief improvements to be desired. I think it would contribute to the security of the books, if, in the new buildings, provision were made of a distinct room in which to deposit books retained in use by the readers, instead of allowing them to remain in the reading-rooms as at present. I would add that I think the establishment of one or more additional libraries in the metropolis a subject highly deserving the consideration of the Committee. There exist more than one endowed foundation, such as that of Archbishop Tenison's library, in St. Martin's-in-the-Fields, which might be made the basis of such branch libraries; and I think that such a disposition of the duplicates of the British Museum, as would aid this object, would be far more advantageous to the public, than the continuance of the present practice of selling them. With reference to the manuscripts, I think it desirable that in addition to a general classed catalogue, the importance of which was so much and deservedly insisted on by former witnesses, there should be published separately a more fully descriptive catalogue of that portion of them which relate to English History; it might be such a catalogue as was suggested by Mr. Planta in 1801, for the public records in the Museum. With reference to the present department of antiquities, I think a subdivision of it would increase its usefulness, and that the marbles, prints, and coins, should each have a separate and responsible keeper; that distinct catalogues of each should be printed for sale, that of the marbles being more descriptive than is that portion of the present synopsis devoted to the antiquities, and at least equally so with the catalogues of the sculpture galleries of Munich and Dresden. . . . It is also highly desirable that selections from the coins and medals should be formed to illustrate history and the progress of the metallic art, and be exhibited openly without restriction. I would add, with regard to the library, that as next in importance to the capacity of supplying the wants of the enquirer from its own stores, is that of indicating to him where such wants as itself cannot supply may be met; so catalogues of other collections in this country, and elsewhere, especially those of manuscripts, would be highly useful; a catalogue, for instance, of the *Cecil Papers*, preserved at Hatfield, would be of great value to any one enquiring at the British Museum into the history of the reigns of Elizabeth or of James I. It might sometimes spare him useless labour in a wrong direction, and knowing what he wanted, he might, if the object were important enough, obtain access to those

papers. As Lord Salisbury permitted a catalogue to be made for the Commissioners on the Public Records, he would no doubt, if applied to, permit one to be made for the British Museum; and so with regard to the libraries of the Houses of Parliament, etc. Of the curious collection of English Tracts discovered in 1832, and destroyed by the fire of 1835, not even the contents are now known, no duplicate catalogue having been preserved. In the same points of view, I think it would be highly worthy of the Trustees of the British Museum to endeavour to collect information as to the materials for British history, etc., contained in foreign libraries and archives, and that the correspondence so kept up between such institutions and the Museum might reasonably be expected to bring with it other and not less direct advantages, and might facilitate an object so much to be desired as the general and regular interchange of the literary productions of this country and of the Continent. In conclusion, I would beg leave to press on the attention of the Committee, the importance of larger annual grants for the purposes of the British Museum, if those purposes are to be attained on a scale at all commensurate with the wants and with the means of this country.

With regard to the report of the committee, and its bearing upon the work of the Museum since that date, the present treatise does not propose to deal. The inquiries of 1835 and 1836 led him, it may be supposed, to give further thought to the history of the British Museum and its work, and formed the germ in his mind for his book published in 1870 on the *Lives of the Founders of the British Museum*.

Edwards' letter addressed to Sir Martin Archer Shee, on the reform of the Royal Academy, consisted of forty-four pages, and is dated from Niton, 20th January, 1839. The writer of it deems it "but justice to an institution which has too often been exposed to covert and indirect attack, that any suggestions for its improvement, from however humble a quarter, should be submitted to its president before the attention of the public is asked for them". He opens by deplored the tone of the controversial publications of the president in his defence of the Royal Academy as well as in the proceedings of that body. A much lower ground had, he claims, been taken in its defence than was necessary. It had been urged, on behalf of the Royal Academy, that those responsible for that

institution had honestly endeavoured to carry out its purposes, and that those funds, which had come into their hands, had been employed for the express purposes it was intended they should be used. Another limited number desired the abolition of the Academy's privileges. With neither party had he any sympathy. The gravamen of the whole charge preferred by public opinion was that the Academy had been unprogressive, and inadequate to the wants of the time, and this was the true and only valuable question which Edwards desired to discuss.

Sir M. A. Shee had written a letter to Mr. Hume respecting his efforts to obtain free admission for the public during a certain period. Edwards says that, had he entered into a calm and dispassionate consideration of the whole question, he would have written differently. He warmly defends Mr. Hume. That gentleman at least deserved to have the credit for right motives. He says : "I am free to confess that as the humblest of those who co-operated with Mr. Hume in that original committee which, after the labour of many months, led to the proceedings at the Freemasons' Tavern in May, 1837, I always deeply regretted that the application for gratuitous admission to the Exhibition of the Royal Academy, including as it must needs do the entire question of the constitution and results of that establishment, was not kept entirely distinct, from those other applications which related to institutions of a clearly public and fully recognised nature". The committee in question advocated free admission to all public monuments in national edifices. "Gratuitous admission to our cathedrals for example," he said, "is one on which the friends of education and of the fine arts are of one mind." The same could not be said with regard to the Academy. That institution depended almost entirely on the revenue derived from admission fees. Why had not the Academy sought to obtain larger powers? Had they done this, zealous friends would have gathered around them, instead of being made suspicious by "apparent willingness to put up with a

continued uncertain and irresponsible character". It was for the Academy to come forward and propose the modifications in its laws and regulations necessitated by the altered circumstances which had arisen since its foundation. Then he proceeds with his suggestions. "The name attached to them," he says, "can add nothing to their value, unless it arise from the circumstance that although deriving from the productions of art the enjoyments I most prize, I have no claim to the appellation of an artist. . . . If my earnest efforts to understand the history and present state of the Academy have been at all successful, I am warranted in entertaining a confident hope that you will agree with me in tracing, to one and the same cause, as well as the defects . . . the incautious combination in one body of men . . . of several distinct functions, the union of which has been found incompatible with the due discharge of each." The three main functions he described as an assembly of honour in the arts; a chief school of instruction in the arts; and a directing body for the chief exhibitions of current productions in the arts. He urged the non-continuance of these three functions. He would dissever the third of these functions from the other two. The exhibition he proposed to leave to the management of an elective and renewable body chosen by the whole of the exhibitors of a certain standing. These several points he discusses at length. His observations cover more than three-fourths of the pamphlet. In these he traverses some of his ground again, but emphasises the leading points: The limitation of number; duration of office; removal of the exclusiveness of spirit; the question of engraving; the Parliamentary inquiries of the eighteenth century; removal of pecuniary dependence on the exhibition; academy as a school of instruction; lectures; academy as a public exhibition; benevolent fund; finances of the academy. These and other questions he surveys in his observations, and surveys them critically and with skilful marshalling of facts. The last sentence in the pamphlet

is, "Believing that the Royal Academy, when invested with the powers, privileges and responsibilities of a national institution will be found to discharge its important functions worthily and zealously, I cannot but earnestly hope that no suggestions, either of a false pride or of a false economy, will be suffered to impede the progress of such reforms as are indispensably necessary to the maintenance of that high character".

Truly this was no ordinary young man. His very boldness must have produced some dismay in certain quarters. What was the immediate result of his pamphlet cannot now be said. That it created more than a passing interest is certain.

## CHAPTER IV.

### WORK AT THE BRITISH MUSEUM 1839-1850, AND HIS ADVOCACY OF PUBLIC LIBRARIES IN 1847 AND 1848.

They (public libraries) may be governed without noise: used without favour: maintained and improved without claptrap appeals to public benevolence, or compulsory recourse to ephemeral excitements. Their truest work will lie in helping to educate the educators: and in facilitating the placing of rate-supported free schools, side by side with rate-supported free libraries, throughout the country. The best fruits of that work will not be seen until those who have striven earnestly to initiate and to carry into effect the legislation which alone has made such institutions possible in England, shall have been long in their graves.

—*Memoirs of Libraries.*

THE following letters between Edwards and Mr. Panizzi, written previously to the former's appointment as assistant in the library of the British Museum, have never before been printed, and serve the useful purpose of illustrating what were the immediate circumstances which led up to Edwards being appointed an assistant in the department of the printed books. They also serve to show the cordial relations which at that time prevailed between Edwards and Panizzi. Mr. Panizzi had succeeded Mr. Baber as Keeper of Printed Books in 1837.

On 5th September, 1838, Mr. Edwards sent to Mr. Panizzi an eight-page foolscap letter addressed from Niton. The letter begins: "During the not very long period that has elapsed since you became the head of the Printed Book department in the British Museum, there have been so many indications of an anxious desire to give the greatest possible extension to the public usefulness of that department, that I feel assured I need make no apology for troubling you with two or three remarks pointing out what appear to me to be further possible means of

advancing that object". Then he proceeds for the remainder of the closely written pages to put forward his views of what improvements can be made.

Mr. (afterwards Sir) A. Panizzi replied on 14th September, 1838:—

Your very valuable letter of the 5th inst. reached me only late the night before last and I beg to return you my best thanks for the interest it displays for an institution to which I am proud to belong, and for the justice you are pleased to render to my anxious desire to give greater possible extension to the public usefulness of the library of printed books in this establishment. Since the opening of the new library several alterations have taken place in the way of experiment which, it is hoped, will be found worthy of being definitely adopted, probably with some modifications, and tend to the comfort and advantage of the readers. It would be too long and not very easy to explain them all to you in writing; and on the other hand they affect in some cases the points on which you suggest changes, so that we cannot enter into an examination of these suggestions without a thorough acquaintance on your part with what has been already done. I trust therefore that you will not take this as an answer to your letter, but merely as a letter of thanks. The value of the observations themselves must be the subject of a verbal and amicable discussion so soon as you find it convenient to call here and which I hope will be immediately on your coming to town. We then will go over all the important topics alluded to in your letter, and I shall probably tell you on the spot and with all means of explanation at hand what I think of them, and what reasons I have for so thinking. Depend upon it every alteration which may appear feasible shall be gladly adopted. In the hope that you will have the kindness to accede to my request.

The next letter is from Edwards to Panizzi, dated 8th October, 1838, written from Niton, and reads:—

The perusal of the papers concerning the Library of the British Museum which you were so kind as to lend me (and especially of that which you intended for the Commons' report) have afforded me so much pleasure and satisfaction, that I will not wait until my return to town to thank you for them, but prefer rather to trouble you with another letter. It shall not, however, be quite so tedious as my last, much of which I should in truth have spared you had I then known what you have done and are now doing at the Museum. I regret very greatly that your paper on the foreign libraries was not printed *entire*<sup>1</sup> and *unaltered*—as it most certainly ought to have been—in the Commons' papers.

<sup>1</sup> The italics are Edwards'.

And although I cannot but still differ from you on a point or two (with the fullest sense however of the deference due to your judgment and experience), yet I must in honesty add that in my own opinion the suggestions contained in that paper which the committee did *not* print are for all practical purposes of substantial improvement, far more than worth the whole of what they *did* print from other witnesses, on the same subjects. I have said that I cannot but (at present) continue to differ from you on a point or two of opinion—I will not now trouble you with my observations upon them, but will hope for another opportunity of enjoying the pleasure of your conversation. But in the meantime there is a matter personal to myself, in connection with the Museum, which I am induced to take this occasion of mentioning to you on account of the fear you expressed the other day that you were about to be deprived of the services of Mr. Watts in your department. Since I have become better acquainted with the Museum, I have often felt that nothing would give me greater pleasure than to find honourable employment in its service, but it is only within the last few days that circumstances have occurred which make me free to offer myself to your notice as desirous of filling the situation of assistant in your department whenever a vacancy may occur should you have no candidate better qualified. The employment is one which would eminently please me and I trust I need scarcely assure you that my best energies and unbroken exertions should be used to discharge it to your fullest satisfaction, should you think fit to honour me with your recommendation.

Mr. Panizzi replied on 13th October to say that Mr. Watts had made arrangements to reassume his duties at the British Museum, and that consequently no place was vacant. Mr. Panizzi followed by saying that had Mr. Watts' determination been different he should have felt sincere pleasure in doing what little he could to assist Mr. Edwards' success in obtaining an appointment.

At the end of January, 1839, Edwards was appointed a supernumerary assistant at the British Museum Library, and remained in that capacity until 1850. This appears to have been his first appointment of any kind, so far as can be ascertained. His work during that period was largely bestowed upon the Thomason collection of pamphlets on the great Civil War. His appointment at the Museum was largely a result of the prominence into which he had come on account of the Hawes pamphlet and his evidence of 1836. With a temper kept within manageable

limits, and an exercise of tact needful in all public positions, and in none more so than in cases where the work is under the control of chiefs, who are themselves responsible to higher heads, the appointment might have been for life, and have afforded opportunity for prominent and material advancement. Throughout the years at the British Museum the late George Bullen was his friend, and the friendship lasted long after Edwards' appointment came to an abrupt termination in 1850. Parry was also a warm friend of Edwards during their years together at the Museum. As the years progressed acerbities frequently displayed themselves between Edwards and Panizzi. Into the cause of these, or the relative degree of blame to be attached to either, it is not necessary at this distant date to enter. Edwards occupied a very subordinate position, and Panizzi a far more prominent one, which later gave him, through the influence of several great statesmen, the coveted position of chief of the Museum. There must have been true worth in Panizzi to draw to him the strong friendship of Palmerston and Gladstone. The shrewd Italian was not without faults of temper. But he held a place of trust in which a display of this weakness of disposition did not show itself so conspicuously as in the case of Edwards, who was more liable to be marked for this defect than a superior who came less frequently in contact with the public. But there was little of the spirit of compromise and conciliation in Edwards' character. The wonder is, looking back upon affairs at such a remote time, that Edwards remained for over ten years at the Museum. On the one hand, it is a tribute to the forbearance of Panizzi, and on the other it is no less a tribute to the real usefulness of Edwards as a servant in this national institution. Both men accomplished work of no mean order: the one for the British Museum at a difficult transition stage in its history, and the other for libraries in the larger area of the nation's life. It is significant that neither of them carried into their public work any of the personal animus

which they felt towards each other. There is not an angry note in any reference to Panizzi in the *Lives of the Founders of the British Museum*. There is, on the contrary, a clear recognition of his claims to the credit of the meritorious work accomplished. Pages 542-3 of the book just named may well remain as Edwards' tribute to his chief. He defended Panizzi's appointment with zeal, and it is evident that Edwards held in high estimation his ability. Edwards displays the same spirit towards Thomas Watts, who was, long prior to the time when Edwards wrote his book on the Museum, the most powerful of Edwards' critics, and one who turned a strong searchlight upon Edwards' statistics prepared for the Parliamentary commissions of 1849-50. It was an uphill task to bring about an adequate improvement in the British Museum. Parliament has dealt with a somewhat niggardly hand in most of its dealings with the British Museum. In the efforts to bring this national institution up to the level which it has since attained, the names of Baber, Panizzi, Watts and Edwards must ever be remembered. Other equally important names of later date could be quoted. The multitude of present users of the British Museum Library little realise all the thought and labour which were involved in bringing the library to its existing splendid condition both in structure and contents.

There are many references in Edwards' diaries to his days at the British Museum, but it is not necessary to quote them, as their gist is contained in the foregoing remarks. One regrets, on looking over these records, that Edwards alone was responsible for the conditions which made it impossible for him to remain at the British Museum. Ewart did not like Panizzi, and this topic, no doubt, was discussed with Edwards during their many conferences in 1848-50. Panizzi had to pay the penalty for his misfortune in being a foreigner, and the blemishes in his personal bearing were sometimes magnified. In commerce, literature, and in other departments of life Britain has benefited from the service of those who have

become her naturalised citizens. It is only fair to Edwards to say that on the score of nationality he had not the slightest prejudice. Could he have carried with him during the years 1839-50 the same largeness of view which is evidenced in the *Lives of the Founders of the British Museum*, there would in all probability have been a more successful career in the service of the State to chronicle. It is impossible on reading his diaries not to feel the throes and throbs of the strain that must at times have existed. The British Museum is so absolutely unique as a national institution, in whatever aspect it may be viewed, that the wish will be shared by many that Edwards' life-long labours could have been retained in its development and administration. A long roll of names known in literature and skilled librarianship is associated with the great structure at Bloomsbury. Edwards' name would not have gone down in library history as a mere museum "supernumerary," now a title happily abolished, and as occupying a subordinate place in the work of the great catalogue, could he have acquired that quietness of spirit and harmonious working with others so essential in such a post as he filled. One reference in the entry in his diary for 24th April, 1846, may be quoted. He says, ". . . Read part of Panizzi's *Memoir* on the state of the library, especially with regard to its deficiencies and the means and cost of supplying them. I may fairly claim the credit of having taken the first steps towards a systematic display of the serious deficiencies in the library ten years ago in my evidence before the committee of the House of Commons."

Here his years at the British Museum must be left. Much more might be said, but there would be no gain to the reader in ploughing over a field of thorns and thistles such as those years present to the student.

Beginning with the middle of 1845 there are in his diaries many references to his work at home, in his leisure, on the *British Librarian*, and there must have been a large accumulation of manuscript for the proposed revival

of this periodical. A bibliography of the monastic libraries represents a good part of his labour, and there were threats of litigation respecting this matter: and the dispute between himself and the publisher who contemplated a reissue of Lowndes' serial was ultimately submitted to arbitration. Oldys' *British Librarian* of 1737, from which the title was derived, is full of interesting details of books and libraries. Lowndes' *British Librarian* was issued from 1839 to 1842. The contemplated republication in 1845 does not seem to have been realised.

Edwards' paper on "Public Libraries in London and Paris," contributed to the *British Quarterly Review* of August, 1847, fills some forty-two pages. His immediate purpose, he states, is to give a rapid summary of the history and existing condition of public libraries in the metropolis. His references to the Dr. Tenison and Dr. Williams' libraries are only brief, but this was inevitable considering the ground which he desired to cover. Then he passes at once to the British Museum, noting specially the early gifts. The fidelity with which he notices the gifts is very marked. In this respect he looked upon himself as a kind of "old mortality". He waxes eloquent on the Grenville bequest, especially of old and rare Bibles, about which he gives brief but very clear particulars. He is proud of the collection of pamphlets. He quotes the elder Disraeli's remark, that "wherever pamphlets abound there is freedom," and the presence of the huge collection of these publications, at the time Edwards wrote this paper, was a certain sign of the freedom which then existed, and still exists, in the freest country in the world. Referring to one period he says that "there is no more useful appliance than a full and impartial collection of the fleeting publications which appeared from day to day in the very eddy of the strife, and the poorest and feeblest of which could not fail to bear something of the shape and impress of the time". Carlyle had, about that time, poured scorn upon the "rubbish mountains of the British

Museum," but to these rubbish mountains the Chelsea sage was himself greatly indebted, as Edwards pointed out on a later occasion. Edwards says of Carlyle, in the paper now under consideration, that he was "a celebrated writer—whose genius and other high qualities are disfigured by a perverse affectation of superciliousness manifestly foreign to the natural bent of his mind". The lover of libraries will be grateful to Edwards for his defence of the British Museum collection of pamphlets. There is not only interest, but often much importance attaching to pamphlets, and this was especially so in the case of the pamphlets named in this article by Edwards. Nowadays the review and magazine writer has taken the place of the pamphleteer of former days; but the pamphlet holds a material place in the economy of literature. Edwards points out, in this article, the deficiencies of the British Museum Library of that time, especially in the departments of continental literature. The government of the day would be aided in coming to a decision, to amend the grant to the Museum, by Edwards' appeal for greater generosity to this national institution. He then surveys the use which was made of the reading-room. He defends the open access to the shelves in the reading-room, and points with some pride to this accommodation, which would be increased as opportunity might offer. Then he turns to the catalogue and argues for an improved catalogue with zeal and practicability. The British Museum Library could scarcely under any conditions have become a lending library, and now in all probability never will. In this paper in the *British Quarterly Review* he again hopes to see the time when an evening reading-room will be possible. All his references to the British Museum Library are not only free from ultra-criticism, but are distinctly appreciative of its great work. He refers next to Sion College Library, and then passes under review the libraries of Paris, if a space of less than three pages can be called a review. But probably his editor had pulled him up.

On 20th March, 1848, he read a paper before the Statistical Society of London giving "A Statistical View of the Principal Public Libraries in Europe and the United States of North America". Within a compass of thirty-one pages Edward Edwards gives a mass of statistics and details which show that he had a masterly grasp of library statistics in their reasonable aspect, and of all that comes within the range of library economics.

He begins in this paper by stating that in very few branches of statistical inquiry was it more difficult to arrive at well-grounded and precise results, than on the question of public libraries. "Yet an accurate computation of the extent of the public libraries in the several States of Europe, and of the amounts expended in their maintenance and enlargement (compared with the population and resources of the respective countries), ought undoubtedly to enter, as a subsidiary element, into any estimate of the educational condition of such States."

He wished to confine himself to such libraries as were really open to the public at large, or to such as derived their support, either wholly or in part, from public sources, and to such as contained 10,000 volumes and upwards. The number of public libraries in Europe contained within these limits he believed to be 383, and he gives a series of long tables to show how these were distributed. These statistics he elaborated with a minuteness which had never before that time been equalled nor attempted since, save as regards the libraries of the United Kingdom and the United States.

He gives a number of figures relating to the British Museum. The effect of the Select Committee of 1835-36, especially in the amount spent for the purchase of new books, chiefly of foreign literature, is indicated. His own evidence before that committee had much to do in bringing this about, but he does not say so. A careful analysis follows, of the expenditure for new books and manuscripts in connection with the Bodleian Library. A number of pages are then devoted to the public libraries of Europe.

He is careful to give his authority for these figures, and his list of these authorities extends to nearly three pages. The statements respecting British and Irish libraries are made, he says, "either from personal knowledge or from the best answers I could obtain to careful inquiries". The term "Public Library," as it appears in the returns given in this paper, must not be interpreted too liberally. He includes the Birmingham "Public Library" founded in 1779, and the New Public Library founded in 1796, and also the Bristol Library founded in 1772. These libraries and the libraries in the university towns given in the tables were, as the reader will not require to be told, open mainly to subscribers or university students. They were not accessible, as the term is now understood, except of course in the case of the British Museum, the Bodleian and other national libraries. The returns are more than instructive. They formed the basis of much of Edwards' evidence before the Parliamentary committees. The latter part of the paper refers to the public libraries in the United States of America. The paper ends with a careful index of cities named in the returns. The entire paper shows the result of a self-imposed task. These various papers illustrate how the subject was beginning to take definite form in the mind of Edwards. They represent the foundation of his work. The superstructure which followed was worthy of the foundation, and the foundation was quite capable of carrying the building which followed.

Edward Edwards' letter of 1848 to the Earl of Ellesmere on the "Paucity of Libraries freely open to the Public in the British Empire" consists of thirty-eight printed pages, and is dated 10th April, 1848, and was written from 14 Westbourne Park Road, Bayswater. The Bridgwater family have been benefactors to literature and to art. As a member of that family the then Earl of Ellesmere rendered good service to the cause of education. He was one of the commissioners for inquiry into the constitution and management of the British Museum, and it is in this capa-

city that Mr. Edwards addresses him. He begins by expressing a desire to elucidate not only the position of the Museum Library, but other libraries in London, public or partially public. He proposes primarily to confine himself to a statistical view of the provision of libraries then existing. He does not desire to rely solely on the argument from comparison between London and other large cities. The utility of public libraries being unquestioned, such a comparison of their paucity in London will aid him to place their existing deficiency in a more salient and practical point of view. London, he said, then possessed four libraries of a somewhat public character. These were the British Museum Library, Sion College, the Dr. Williams' and Archbishop Tenison's. He then goes minutely into the sources of income of each of these libraries, the number of volumes and some other details. None of them were lending libraries under any circumstances whatever. That is, as compared with to-day, there was not in all the metropolis in 1848 a public lending library. Sunday-school and working men's institute libraries existed, but the latter were subscription libraries. The reader should fix that fact clearly in mind. It is the starting-point of the public library movement. Edwards emphasised the statement in clear language.

He goes on to state that Paris possessed seven libraries which were public in the strictest sense of the term, and then enumerates them and gives statistics respecting them. London had at the date named 476,500 books accessible to the public for reference, and Paris had 1,354,000. Berlin had two public libraries and Florence six, and he especially notes that the books of the Royal Library, Berlin, were lent out under proper precautions. He surveys other cities in a similar way. Dresden had four, and the Royal Library in that city was a lending library, as also was the Royal Library of Munich. The criticisms respecting these figures, which appeared in the *Athenaeum* at a later date, will be dealt with in a succeeding chapter.

He notes that the private libraries in the metropolis pro-

bably surpassed those of every other country. The duplicates in the British Museum then amounted to at least 52,000, and the greater portion of these duplicates could not, he forcibly argued, be more usefully employed than in the formation of a metropolitan public lending library. A list follows of the continental lending libraries, and a longer list of foreign libraries ranked in numerical order of volumes. He traces the origin and the progressive increase of these libraries. Many pages are devoted to these details, and London is shown at a considerable disadvantage. In summing up this portion of his argument, he says:—

London, with its population of two millions, ought surely to possess other libraries, somewhat different in character, and with different aims. That in such a country as this, there should be one great national storehouse . . . But in addition to this, libraries in different quarters . . . on a humbler scale, very freely accessible, and aiming at more immediate and educational utility are much to be desired.

He proceeds to answer, in advance, some of his critics who might think that, if the libraries of corporations and learned societies were included in the estimate, London would assume a higher place than it takes in the list. He glides over this point rather hurriedly, and in fact did not give to it the attention which it deserved. But it may be said that the libraries were proprietary, inasmuch as they were only available to members.

Then he turns to some of the large provincial cities and begins with Dublin, following with Edinburgh, Manchester and other places. Among all the libraries of the country, Manchester took, he said, the first place in having in the Chetham Library the most easily accessible library in Great Britain. That will ever be a proud claim. Birmingham had no library which could be called public in the sense in which he applied the term, and Liverpool was in precisely the same condition. He contrasts Hamburg with Liverpool, and the former city had great book advantages according to his showing. France and Prussia and other countries are then placed under review.

A total of thirty libraries for the United Kingdom was enumerated. Of these, twenty were university libraries, whilst some others had but doubtful claim to be considered public at all, so that the remaining number was meagre in the extreme. Some of these, he said, professedly excluded all works on theology and politics. Then he says:—

A very different spirit must preside over the management and collection of public libraries such as may really promote education in its fullest sense, and aid in the preparation of the great masses of the population, for the wise and prudent exercise of their rights, and for the honest and conscientious discharge of their duties.

He follows with a list of the university libraries, and he hopes that his facts will merit the attention of the commission. As a humble citizen he is grateful to Parliament for its liberality (*sic*) to the British Museum. But he entertains “a strong conviction that it will not be for the honour of Parliament or the advantage of the country that its liberality should stop there: Those great provincial towns, which are the centres of our manufactures and commerce, might well claim a share in it. This immense metropolis needs other libraries than that of the Museum. . . .”

Then there is a personal note. Since his remarks were first submitted to Lord Ellesmere, he had the satisfaction of seeing that Mr. Ewart had introduced his motion for a Select Committee. This letter to Lord Ellesmere and Edwards’ paper before the Statistical Society were among the direct causes which led to that committee being appointed.

Other questions are dealt with in the pamphlet, such as the books acquired under the Copyright Act, and the national interchange of books. “A great boon,” he says, “would be conferred on society, if facilities were . . . afforded for the formation of libraries of humbler aims and extent, in such of the smaller towns, and even of the villages, as are yet without them.” He then proceeds to gather up his arguments.

In the attempt to extend libraries throughout the country upon whatever system, there will doubtless be some opposition to be overcome, and more indifference to be transformed into sympathy and co-operation. But the ground once broken, co-workers will soon be met with. A measure which should at once invite voluntary subscriptions, confer the power of levying a library rate by consent of a certain proportion of rate-payers in any district, and also provide for some amount of parliamentary aid at the outset, would probably be that best calculated to attain the object in view. . . . A public provision of schools, without a public provision of libraries, would evince small regret for logical sequences. . . . Those who can read will never be without reading of some sort. . . . To place good literature within everybody's reach is certainly the best way to counteract the empty frivolity, the crude scepticism and the low morality of a portion . . . of the current popular literature of the day. . . . To make books of the highest order freely and easily accessible throughout the length and breadth of the land, were surely to give no mean furtherance to the efforts of the schoolmaster, and of the Christian minister, to produce under God's blessing a tranquil, a cultivated and a religious people. "

Such was the programme of this pioneer for the people's universities. There is an appendix giving an appropriate tabular view of libraries containing 10,000 volumes and over, accessible to the public in the seven States of Europe. The closing pages of the pamphlet are devoted to the form of petition to the House of Commons in favour of the Parliamentary inquiry.

In 1848, during the time of the Chartist troubles, Mr. Panizzi asked Edwards if he would be sworn in as a special constable. An attack on the Museum was threatened, and the officials were sworn in as special constables. His sympathies were then with the Chartists. He writes of disgraceful proclamations against them, and on this he says: "I resolved, immediately waiving all minor disagreement, to sign the petition for 'The Charter,' as my humble and individual protest against this nefarious proceeding". Sad to say even this old sympathy did not remain, for, in 1876, he added this note to that entry in the diary, "I look at this entry after some twenty-eight years with very different convictions re Chartists".

On 25th June of the same year he went to hear Emerson's

lecture on "The Superlative in Manners and Literature," of which he remarks, "A very ingenious inculcation of the virtues and value for us of the merely positive, the quiet and the measured in manner and language, over the extreme and the extravagant. But accompanied with a vindication of the superlative in the oriental literatures and amongst the eastern peoples—especially the Persians as represented by their poet Hafiz." At a later date, and probably at the same time as the note just quoted about the Chartists, he added this remark, to the reference to the quiet and the measured in manner and language, "An excellent lesson, and one never by any more needed, than by the writer of this diary.—E.E.". Poor man! he keenly felt the trouble that his turbulent disposition had caused him all through life.

## CHAPTER V.

### DIGEST OF THE EVIDENCE OF EDWARDS BEFORE THE PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEES OF 1849 AND 1850.

But, besides the Libraries for the learned, and for those who aspire to become learned, other collections are needed for readers of a class to whom such an ambition is unknown. And, in this path, Englishmen may fairly boast that they have rather set an example than waited to follow one. The task was not easy, but those who worked at it—with many shortcomings—had the one merit which often repairs defect, and ekes out small means,—they persevered, in spite of obstacles.

—*Libraries and Founders of Libraries.*

THESE Parliamentary inquiries must ever stand out as the charter of the public library movement. They may be ancient history now, but it is necessary for the sake of completeness to look closely at Edwards' place in the work of the committees. It may never again be necessary to tell the story; but the reader is asked to kindly bear with the recording of it on the present occasion. The first letter from William Ewart to Edwards, among the correspondence in the Manchester Reference Library, is dated 1st February, 1838, and is about some foreign returns respecting institutions of art. During the same month Ewart asks for Edwards' help in using some canvassing cards. Exactly what these were is not clear. The correspondence was continued at intervals, and on 23rd August, 1848, Ewart wrote to Edwards:—

Observing that you have made a valuable contribution to the *Statistical Journal* on the subject of public libraries, and having myself made motions on the same subject several years ago in the House of Commons, I am induced to write to you respecting it. . . . I believe that libraries freely open to the nation (as on the continent) would have a considerable effect on our national character. . . . Before such a committee, evidence might be given . . . of the best mode of

instituting, maintaining and affecting the formation of libraries. . . . I apprehend that enough could be supplied to justify enquiry? Submitting these ideas to your consideration.

On 28th August, 1848, Edwards enters in his diary, "Letter from Mr. Ewart, M.P., about public libraries. . . . Desirability of a Select Committee. . . . Wrote to Mr. Ewart warmly approving his idea of a Select Committee." On 4th September, "Letter from Mr. Ewart approving return from . . . Marsh's Library, Dublin". . . . On 7th September, "Letter from Mr. Ewart on proposed committee". On 28th September, "Wrote to Mr. Ewart . . . making suggestions as to lending libraries, etc.".

On 5th October, 1848, Ewart wrote:—

... Your circular . . . appears to me at once comprehensive and precise. . . . It is very desirable that the municipalities should form libraries for the inhabitants. . . . I have your letter to Lord Ellesmere and shall duly attend to the subject of lending libraries. . . . The outline which you propose of your evidence will be very serviceable, and will guide me in other cases as well as in your own. . . . I shall be fixed in town . . . when I shall hope to have the pleasure of seeing you.

On 25th December, 1848, Edwards enters, "Wrote to Ewart offering to call on him either on Sunday or on Monday next". For 1st February, 1849, he enters, "Letter from Ewart telling me he had to-day given notice of motion for Select Committee on libraries". On 2nd February, "Wrote to Ewart enclosing copies of papers on public libraries . . . and sending him recent letters . . . promising to call at nine". On 3rd February, "Letters from Ewart, the first asking me to send copies of pamphlets on libraries to various M.P.'s, the second . . . to proposed interview on Monday at nine". On 5th February, "Called on Mr. Ewart at nine o'clock. Conferred with him about sending copies of pamphlets which he wishes me to reprint . . . about getting up petitions to House of Commons, etc. . . . Drew up petitions on libraries for . . . institution, and wrote Ewart thereon enclosing copy." On 6th February, "Mr. Hume called on me and

spoke about desirability of evidence and suggestions on libraries. . . .”

On 7th February, 1849, from Ewart:—

“ . . . Lord John Russell shakes his head at the Committee . . . sees no object for it. . . . I must see after the Returns moved for last session at your suggestion. . . . Would it not be well to draw up a series of questions, and lithograph them for the purpose? . . . The petition you have sketched is a very good one. . . . I am afraid I shall have to trouble you with frequent letters as the subject opens on us.

On 8th February he enters, “ Letters from Ewart (two) stating progress in House of Commons ”. On 9th February, “ Letter from Ewart desiring me to reprint pamphlet ”. On 15th February, “ . . . to House of Commons desiring to see Hume and Ewart ”. On 18th February, “ Worked on circular queries about foreign libraries ”. On 19th February, “ Wrote Ewart with queries enclosing . . . ”

On 20th February, 1849, Ewart wrote, “ I am much obliged by your unwearied co-operation ”, and a little while afterwards, “ You will perhaps be so good as draw up an outline of interrogations . . . ”

On 21st February Edwards enters, “ Wrote notes for examination before Ewart’s committee on libraries, . . . also began preparation of ‘ Tabular View ’ for reprint. Wrote letters to accompany pamphlet to the following by desire of Ewart.” Then follow the names of Gladstone, Disraeli, Villiers and others. The intervening days were occupied in very much the same way.

On 10th March, “ Letters from Ewart (two) ”. On 11th March, “ Wrote to Mr. Ewart giving him . . . and appointing to call on him on Tuesday next at nine ”. On 12th March, “ Wrote notes for Ewart about libraries of Birmingham and Dublin ”. On 13th March, “ Called on Ewart and had long conference with him about explanatory statement on introducing his motion and on formation of Committee ”. On 14th March, “ Letter from Ewart telling me I am on Speaker’s list for to-morrow ”. On 15th March, “ Met Ewart who took me to Speaker’s gallery—he was hesitating whether to bring on his notice, or not, but I advised

him to do so, unless it were certain the delay would not exceed a fortnight". On 19th March, "Letter from Ewart asking me to draw up interrogations, etc., and giving his rough notes of 'plan of campaign'; replied, proposing to call on him at nine to-morrow". On 20th March, "Called on Ewart who read to me his proposed committee list as far as it is settled—gave me a cheque for expenses of re-printing pamphlet—£15." On 22nd March, "Ewart sent me letters and documents from Glasgow. . . . Wrote Mr. George Dawson (Birmingham), asking him to give evidence before Mr. Ewart's committee . . . M. Guizot with copy of pamphlets (at Ewart's desire)." On 24th March, "Letter from Ewart with list of committee nominated yesterday (and from others about library matters)". On 25th March, "Wrote . . . also to Ewart with outline of questions for MM. Guizot and Van de Weyer". A few days are passed here, but on each he heard from or wrote to Ewart. On 30th March, "Letters from Ewart. Wrote Sir H. Verney, Mr. Kershaw, Mr. Thicknesse and Mr. C. Knight with copies of pamphlet." On 31st March, "Letters to-day (three) from Mr. Ewart apprising me of proceedings of Libraries Committee yesterday, and their adjournment to Thursday, 19th April, also enclosing letters from Rev. W. Brown, of Edinburgh, and a *Memoir on Itinerating Libraries*. . . . Evening, wrote Ewart answering these letters, advising application to Abp. Whately for evidence—suggesting lithography of general questions." On Sunday, 1st April, he enters, "Very unwell and tired—so at home all day".

On 3rd April Ewart wrote that he was going out of town for the Easter recess, and asked, "Would it be agreeable to you to come . . . on Good Friday and pass the day with me at a cottage I have in Buckinghamshire? You can take an early dinner with me and my children, and we can afterwards confabulate. Bring the papers if you come." Then from Elstead Lodge, Godalming, "Will you come out here next Saturday and stay till Monday? We can then talk over the library question.

. . . On reconsidering the subject and the advice which you have been so good as supply, I think it might be most advisable . . . to get a well-signed petition . . . which we could present in a body. Then the fact would get into the papers and excite public attention."

For 6th April he enters, "Left town at eleven by Great Western Railway for Slough, and thence (Ewart sending his carriage for me) to Pickeridge. I had a very delightful ramble with him—the day being beautiful. Dined with him and his children, and had pleasant chat, with instructive allusions to Panizzi's Liverpool career, introduced quite unexpectedly by him *à propos* of my conjecture as to influence used with Sir G. Grey to obstruct Ewart's committee. We went over draft questions for foreign witnesses together. . . ." On 10th April, "Letter from Ewart. . . . Revised draft of questions to be put to witnesses . . . respecting foreign libraries—beginning with Guizot on those of France." On 11th April, "Wrote Ewart sending him revised copy of questions. . . . Wrote Ewart enclosing three other copies of questions. Letter from him with letters from . . ." On 12th, 13th, 14th, 16th April, entries similarly full. Every day he heard from Ewart. On 17th April, "Letter from Ewart—wishing to see me to-morrow. Evening, completed draft of questions and prepared notes for examination, also revising Tables for the Appendix, etc., till 1 o'clock A.M."

All through 1849 and through a good part of 1850 it is the same record. Pages by the score could be filled with copies of the entries from the diaries. They all tell the same story. Early and late he toiled for these committees. Ewart pelted him with questions, consulted him upon every detail, and followed closely, so far as can be seen, the advice given by Edwards. Their chats in the long walks taken together in lovely Surrey are recorded by Edwards in his diaries, intermingled with all his enthusiasm for the country. It was in these interviews and correspondence that the whole subject was threshed out. The anvils upon which were forged the public library

movement—one destined to spread itself over the whole Empire—were Edwards' writing-table and Ewart's study. Every detail was discussed between them, and in numerous instances it is plain that Edwards was the suggester, and Ewart, with the quick practical mind of an active public man, the executor, instant to see what was possible and what was not possible.

In the Report of the Select Committee of 1849, extending to nearly twelve pages of the blue book, there is at the end the record that "The thanks of the Committee are especially due to Mr. Edwards of the British Museum, who has not only devoted a large portion of his time to the subject, but supplied to the Committee the result of his inquiries and his experience during many years". The eulogy is not extravagant. Edwards being at the time a public servant in receipt of a salary is probably the reason for the scanty reference to him in the report.

Edwards was examined by the committee on 19th April, 1849. In reply to the preliminary questions, he said that he had been an assistant in the department of printed books at the British Museum between ten and eleven years. Had he given attention to the subject and published articles upon libraries? Yes, he had given attention to the subject during many years, and had published articles upon the subject. He found great difficulty in making statistical comparisons. Asked, had he found it easy to acquire accurate data for making comparisons between libraries (Q. 8), he said:—

It is a matter of very considerable difficulty indeed: there are few subjects upon which looser and vaguer statements are to be found, even in statistical works of great repute, than upon that matter. In fact the difficulty is still greater with respect to English libraries than with respect to foreign; very little attention has been bestowed upon the statistics of libraries, either home or foreign, in this country, and I think there are but two ways in which anything like accurate information can be obtained, namely, either by practical familiarity with the libraries themselves, which it has not been in my power to attain to any great degree, or by correspondence, which latter I have carried on to a considerable extent. It is upon that I base most of the results at which I have arrived.

He would define the term "Public," as applied to libraries in reference to this inquiry, as "embracing, first of all, libraries deriving their support from public funds, either wholly or in part; and I would further extend it to such libraries as are made accessible to the public to a greater or less degree".

The result of his comparison between the libraries of the continent and those which then existed in this country was "That nearly every European State is in a far higher position, both as to the number and extent of libraries accessible to the public, and, generally, as respects the accessibility of such libraries as do exist. There are some exceptions, but, speaking generally, in both those respects, almost every European State is in a far higher position than this country."

The difficulties that English authors experienced in having access to works of reference were dealt with pointedly. He began with the well-known instance of Gibbon, who said that he had constantly found the greatest difficulty in consulting books, from the want of a good public library. Gibbon complained of the need to send for books from abroad, and sometimes this had to be done to verify a single citation, and stated that he was often in a much better position when residing in Switzerland and in France, than when residing in this country.

The library world may be grateful to Gibbon for the statement of this fact. It set some of the men from the universities thinking that there might be after all something in the plea that libraries were needed.

Edwards referred next to Roscoe when at work on his *Life of Lorenzo de' Medici* and his *Life of Leo the Tenth*. Even in a town like Liverpool there was no great public library to which he could have access for the purpose of consulting Italian authorities. A reference in the *Curiosities of Literature* was mentioned, where the elder Disraeli said that it was often necessary at the British Museum to wait for some days before a book could be obtained. Comparisons were made as to the advantage possessed

by foreign authors, as against English writers, in having access to libraries, and Edwards said that there was no doubt about English literature having suffered from the disadvantage. The number of libraries in France was next referred to, and he mentioned 107 libraries with an aggregate of 4,000,000 volumes open to the public. Some of these he had himself seen used by persons of rank, and he could state that, even in the libraries in small provincial towns, works of rarity and great value were often to be found. Belgium, Prussia, Austria, Saxony, Bavaria, Denmark and Tuscany were next dealt with in the order here given. The basis of his replies were the statistics previously prepared for his paper for the Statistical Society.

Then he dealt with the libraries in Paris, and gave a list of those to which he desired to call the attention of the committee. In reply to the question (45) as to whether those he enumerated were lending libraries, he said that all except one were such, and in reply as to how he would define a lending library, he replied that he would define such a library as one where "the books . . . are to be borrowed, not as a matter of favour, but as a matter of right upon complying with certain recognised conditions". In Paris, he said, it was upon a recommendation or introduction vouching for the reputability of the party applying to borrow books. Asked as to what libraries in England it would be possible for a student or reader to enter and ask for a book for use in the library, and be supplied without stating who he was, he said that he believed there was only one such, the Chetham Library at Manchester. Marsh's library in Dublin, he said, was in practice just as accessible. But evidently in his mind the Humphrey Chetham Library was the one library in all the United Kingdom permitting its books to be used by any one in the library without let or hindrance. All honour to the Chetham Library for occupying this distinction. It is probable, however, that in this reply Edwards overlooked the Stirling Library at Glasgow, which was an endowed library, freely accessible for reference purposes to any inquirer.

The committee again turned to the continental libraries. Particulars of the libraries in Milan, Munich, Copenhagen, Florence and other cities were given, and he handed to the committee his general list of the public libraries in Europe. He had, he said, given his authorities, and only claimed to put it forward as an approximate list. He had, he continued, "addressed circulars with questions to the librarians as well as to literary friends, and had obtained answers from a great many of them". He named as lending libraries (Q. 91), six in Paris, three each in Dresden and Copenhagen, and the royal libraries in Brussels, Munich and Vienna, and one in Milan. A certain social position or some introduction satisfactory to the librarian was required on the part of borrowers.

Some dozen questions followed respecting the public libraries in the United States. As to the measure of accessibility in these, he said that a great many of them, although being corporate property, were made practically as accessible as if they were public property. As to the number of lending libraries among them, he said that the university libraries were generally lending libraries to those belonging to the universities, and libraries belonging to societies were usually lending libraries to members of those societies.

The State libraries were, he said, lending libraries "for all persons bringing satisfactory introductions". Very great attention was given, he said, to the maintenance and improvement of those libraries by the Legislature of the United States. The Astor, Smithsonian and Harvard Libraries were next mentioned. "Do you think that if libraries were accessible and made a matter of public interest many persons would be induced to bequeath books to such public libraries?" (Q. 101.) "I think," he said, "there is very great evidence of that in what has been done, both for the British Museum and for the Bodleian Library." The origin of some of the libraries in the United States was inquired about. In his answer he referred to legislative grants of the particular states. Congress passed

a vote for the Congress Library. Then in conjunction with this part of the subject he was asked what libraries on the continent as well as the United States were supported by the State: what by vote of constitutional assembly, and what by municipalities. His reply referred to Paris only, and was to the effect that for the four chief libraries of Paris the cost was some £23,555 yearly. The amount of State or municipal support given to the provincial libraries in Belgium, and those of Munich, Berlin and other cities, was next surveyed, and in reply he said that as a general rule "they were supported by municipal and in some instances by communal funds".

An important question was number 112. "Do they ever levy a rate upon a town for the support of a public library?" The reply was, "That obtains in many of the German states, I believe: but I have not information to enable me to state precisely to what extent". How many known instances were there of any foreign lending libraries having ceased to be so in consequence of the abuse of the privilege?

I do not know any instance of that kind: I know that very great complaint has been made in several cities of such abuses, but I think they have occurred in consequence of inadequate regulations, and might have been obviated by better management.

The privileges of borrowing were not open to the humblest class. As to the use of the continental libraries by the middle and working classes—

I believe in France they are to a considerable extent: there are libraries in France of every grade and class: in Paris itself each of the libraries, I believe, may be said to have a distinct class of visitors: one sort of visitors resort to one library, and one to another. The Ste Geneviève Library in particular has been noticed for the considerable number of persons of the humbler classes who frequent it: the fact of its being open in the evening is calculated to produce that result.

Maps drawn up by the witness showing the relative position of the libraries in continental cities were then handed in to the committee. As to who were responsible for the safe custody of the books in the public libraries,

the librarian, he said, was usually responsible. There were regulations laid down which imposed upon the borrower the condition of returning books within a specified period, and if not returned the value must be paid. Registers were kept of the names and addresses of borrowers, and it was the duty of the librarian, upon failure of the return of any book within a specified period, to apply to the borrower. The depositing of securities was required in several cases, but he looked upon this as being the exception rather than the rule. In Paris there were aggravated cases, and books had been unreturned for years, but this he affirmed was owing to the insufficiency of the regulations.

A question from Mr. Brotherton (Q. 126) elicited the reply that the libraries in the capital cities of most of the European states belonged to the State. In the provincial towns the libraries were the property of the municipality. Mr. Ewart, the chairman of the committee, asked how far the libraries submitted to the inspection of the Minister of Public Instruction.

With respect to France, the usual practice is that reports are periodically addressed to the Minister of Public Instruction, and supervision is exercised over the provincial libraries, by inspectors. In France there are inspectors-general of libraries who make occasional visits to the provincial libraries and report to the Minister of Public Instruction.

In this it was admitted by the witness that there was a more centralised system than would be probably compatible with the usages of this country. A reference followed as to how many libraries in France had been the result of private foundations: he said that a great number had resulted from the dissolution of the monastic establishments.

The committee then turned (Q. 130) from the foreign libraries to the libraries of our own country. He replied:—

In respect to this country, there is great difficulty in drawing the line with precision as to what is really a publicly accessible library, and what is only accessible as a matter of mere grace and favour: therefore I have included some in my estimate, the admission to

which is only to be considered as a favour, but is practically accorded to some considerable extent. With that prefatory observation, I find about thirty-three libraries, more or less publicly accessible in Great Britain and Ireland, with an aggregate of 1,771,493 volumes of printed books.

He presented a list of these libraries. For the sake of completeness, and to show from what a foundation the modern public library movement has grown, the libraries are named, without the statistics, in the order in which he enumerated them :—

Aberdeen : King's College and Marischal College Libraries	2
Armagh : Primate Robinson's Library	1
Cambridge : Public Library, Queen's College and Trinity College Libraries, Catherine's Hall and Christ's College	5
Dublin : Trinity College, Marsh's Library, Dublin Society and Royal Irish Academy, King's Inns Library	5
Edinburgh : Library of Faculty of Advocates, University Library, Library of Writers to Signet	3
Glasgow : University Library, Hunterian Museum Library and Stirling's Library	3
London : British Museum Library, Sion College Library, Dr. Williams' Library and Archbishop Tenison's Library, Lambeth Palace Library	5
Manchester : Chetham Library	1
Oxford : Bodleian Library, All Saints' College, Christ's Church College, Radcliffe Library, Ashmolean Library, Queen's College, Oriel College and Wadham College	8
St. Andrew's University Library, and the Warrington Public Library	2

Asked (Q. 131) if he could assign any reason for the comparative fewness of public libraries in this country as compared with many other countries. The reply was important and is given in full :—

I think one reason which may be assigned is, that while in foreign countries the libraries of monastic foundation were generally appropriated to the public use, in this country they were for the most part destroyed, or injured to a very considerable extent. Proofs of that will be found in Leland's *Collectanea*. Perambulating England a few years after the dissolution of monasteries, he frequently speaks of the destruction of valuable books; he says, in reference to one town he visited, the bakers' ovens were still supplied with monastic books. That, however, will account for the fact only in a limited degree.

Another reason of the fewness of public libraries in this country has been the isolation of such bequests or foundations of libraries as have occurred. They have been left without any sort of general control or supervision, and for want of that, I think, they have not been so fruitful in leading to imitation, as they would have been if brought under some more direct administration. In proof of that statement I would instance the foundation of the Cotton Library. For the first sixty years after the institution of the Cotton Library for public use, there was but one addition made to it, by Major Arthur Edwards. That was the only instance during sixty years. During that time the Cotton Library was very ill cared for; it was ill-lodged, several times moved, dilapidated, and very much injured by fire on one occasion, and suffered greatly from want of attention and good management; but, on the Cotton Library being incorporated with the British Museum, during the next sixty years following that incorporation, there were not less than eight or nine important collections bequeathed or presented in addition to that collection.

Some further questions were based on the encouragement which is given to donors of books if there is a proper place for the keeping of such books, and especially where there is a responsible control in perpetuity. This is a vital principle attaching to public libraries under the Acts, and was thus foreshadowed in one trend of the Parliamentary inquiry. "You think," he was asked, "that one of the advantages of a library which is well known to be public, is that it invites public contributions?" "Yes," he replied, "I think experience shows that to a remarkable extent." Question 140 sought to get deeper down to the cause of the comparatively small number of public libraries in this country. He assigned as a reason, the scant attention which had been bestowed on the part of the Government. It was only, he pointed out, within a very few years that Parliamentary grants in aid of education and literature had been up to that time at all prominent in the estimates. The Parliamentary grants to the British Museum were, in a succeeding answer, carefully outlined by the witness. This fact may cheer the educationist, that the British Museum had at that early day the largest amount of public money voted for it of any library in the world then existing. The committee

then turned to the degree of accessibility in libraries, and he was asked how he would classify them. His reply was :—

First, I would take those which are gratuitously and unrestrictedly accessible to the public: secondly, those which are gratuitously accessible of right, but only on the production of some special recommendation: thirdly, those that are the property of corporate or proprietary bodies, admission to which is given on certain conditions as a matter of favour.

Again, he gave the credit of being the only free library in the United Kingdom and Ireland, to the Chetham Library at Manchester, and this, he said, was unrestrictedly accessible. The only formality which was necessary was the writing of the name and address in a register book. The libraries in the United Kingdom accessible of right, on the production of some sort of recommendation or introduction, he gave as ten or at most eleven. These were accessible on the production of a recommendation from some person of standing; as at the British Museum. Twenty or twenty-one other libraries, he said, were accessible as a matter of grace or favour, such as college libraries and libraries of that description. Questions were asked about legal and medical libraries, and after these had been disposed of, the library of Sion College, Dr. Williams' and Archbishop Tenison's Libraries were taken in review. Maps of London, Edinburgh and Dublin were put in showing the public libraries in these cities. Details were given of the number of volumes to every hundred inhabitants in Paris, Berlin and other cities, showing London at a disadvantage. The part of London immediately around the British Museum was best supplied, and next to that the City. The Guildhall Library, he said, was very easily accessible, to such persons as desired to consult the books. Now it may be said, by way of parenthesis, that the library is open to all who desire to use the books. Questions were asked if any public library existed in Marylebone, Finsbury, Southwark or Pimlico, and to each question he had to answer, "None at all". Questions about Edinburgh and

Dublin followed, and full reference was made to Marsh's Library in the latter city. From 1713, the date of the foundation, to 1828, some 1,200 volumes were lost, and this he attributed to the defective management in the library. The books were unstamped, and readers were permitted to go to the presses and take the books down. The committee wished to press home the fact as to whether the general public could be trusted to have unrestricted access to a library. The case of Marsh's Library helped in clearing up this point. It was not the freedom of access which was responsible for the losses, but the defective control. Up to 1828 there had been unrestricted admission, and then this was changed. Some other libraries were next discussed, Glasgow was then reviewed and questions were asked about other libraries in Scotland.

Then came what the lawyers call a leading question, in number 281. How many of the libraries which you have named are lending libraries? His reply was:—

None at all, with the single exception of the library I have mentioned already as existing at Armagh; there are no free lending libraries in Great Britain of any kind. The university libraries, except that of Trinity College, Dublin, are lending libraries to the members; the Library of the Faculty of Advocates at Edinburgh has been, by special favour, in certain cases, a lending library, but not of right.

The library at Armagh was founded by Primate Robinson, contained about 12,000 volumes, and was liberally endowed. Other questions with regard to the libraries of the Universities of Aberdeen, St. Andrews, Edinburgh and Glasgow were asked, and then the committee adjourned until the 24th April, when Edwards was again under examination.

In the beginning of that day's evidence, the witness put in a statement of the number of members of, and volumes in, the libraries of several Mechanics' Institutions in Lancashire and Cheshire. In some of these libraries, during the winter season, the whole of the books had been in circulation, and not a volume left in the library. This he quoted from the Rev. William Brown's pamphlet

relative to itinerating libraries in East Lothian. The pamphlet, said the witness, had attracted more attention on the continent than in England. It was translated into French and German, and was even circulated in St. Petersburg. The attempt to form these travelling libraries began in 1816, and was carried on up to the death of the originator about 1839. This attempt to form libraries was of an interesting nature, and Edwards quoted some passages from its pages. These early attempts to provide reading for the people are historic in the library movement, especially in view of the recent great extension of travelling libraries in America.

Questions 313 and 314 referred to the cathedral libraries. Then a slight departure was made from the immediate purpose of the inquiry. Edwards had said that he considered that education was inferior in England to what it was abroad, in relation to a certain class of the population. He said that he thought one great cause of the deficiency was "the want of means on the part of large numbers of the population to defray the cost of schooling for their children even where there is a desire to do it. Another cause is the extreme duration of the hours of labour, and the extremely early age at which young persons are forced to do something towards gaining a livelihood; and another, the great deficiency of good schools and of properly trained schoolmasters. I think all those are causes tending very much, of necessity, to abridge educational facilities, and ought to be remedied."

In answer to a question shortly afterwards put, he said:—

In addition to the positive want of schooling on the part of large numbers of the population who are now growing up, those who do get some partial education, habitually neglect to improve what they get, from the want of cultivating a taste for reading. I think that is one great cause, and unless good books are made accessible, it is very likely to continue to be a cause, even where education, by Sunday schools, and other efforts of that kind, has been brought within the reach of considerable numbers of the population, why the good effect has not been continued in after life.

Here comes his statement as to elementary education being one of the main pillars of the public library movement. Asked, if in his opinion, as education increases, the facilities for obtaining books ought to be increased in proportion also, his answer was "Yes," and this he strengthened in the next reply. Those who knew how to read would get bad books instead of good books to read if the better literature were not provided. Some features of education in Scotland followed. The state of education in East Lothian he considered superior to that of a great many continental states, and this he attributed to the

wise and provident foresight of preceding generations, who had taken legislative measures to bring schools almost over the length and breadth of two-thirds of Scotland, making efforts to secure their permanence, and not committing them merely to the chances and hazards of voluntary effort, and occasional local subscriptions, but really providing them by legislative measures.

It would be useful if that reply could be rubbed at the present moment into some of our legislators at Westminster. Did he think that libraries superadded to such a scholastic system would be of great use in Scotland? "Of great importance, and I do not believe a more prudent or a more wise subsidiary measure could be taken with reference to education, than to connect with schools, lending libraries of a good kind."

Inquiries about parochial libraries followed, and he gave some interesting particulars in reply to the questions respecting these libraries. There was at one time a considerable number of these parochial libraries. Their history is a very interesting one, and the subject should be better known. The report of Lord Brougham's Commission to inquire into public charities says little of these libraries. Institute libraries in villages and village libraries were next inquired into. "Now that books are so cheap (Q. 341), would not they be of easy establishment, and very desirable for the rural population?" "Highly desirable, I think," said the witness. Congregational libraries in connection with churches and chapels.

were discussed. Of Sunday-school libraries there were a considerable number, and attended with very good results. He was asked by the chairman, "by what means" he thought "the formation of new public libraries might best be promoted". The first means he could recommend would be an extension of the Museums Act. The object of this Act, he said, "was to levy a rate for the establishment of museums, proceeding upon a requisition or resolution of a definite proportion of the ratepayers, . . . such rate not to exceed a halfpenny in the pound upon the rental of the district". Had the Act been extensively taken advantage of?

I fear that it has not been largely taken advantage of, and I would attribute that to the circumstance that no provision has been made for bringing a Parliamentary grant in aid of local contribution, as is done in educational matters, but everything has been made to depend upon local effort. I can cite one instance of its being acted on with reference also to a library. In Warrington there is now a museum and library, partly supported by a halfpenny rate, levied by the town council under the Museums Act, which produces about £80 per annum, and partly by annual subscriptions, which are already promised to the extent of about £70. There is also a fund subscribed for the erection of a building at some future opportunity, and in the meantime interest upon so much as is paid up, about £250, is applied towards the payment of rent for a temporary building. That library was originally a private subscription library, founded in 1760.

The Museums Act did not authorise the levying of a rate for the formation of a public library, and the library could not have been assisted except from the fact that it was part of a museum. Sir H. Verney asked if he thought it desirable to extend that power to other districts where town councils did not exist. "Highly desirable," said the witness, "and that otherwise very little good can be done." Asked as to what bodies he would entrust with such power, he said:—

I think the best principle would be to take the circumscription of the Parliamentary boroughs generally, and give a power to a certain proportion of the ratepayers in every such Parliamentary borough. I think the principle should be the expressed consent of a definite proportion of the ratepayers, and that there should be a similar power to

that given to Town Councils by the Museums Act. The principle might also be extended to parishes, or poor law unions ; or the circumscriptions of the public health bill might be taken.

Had he turned his attention to the expediency of a grant being made by Parliament, to assist in the formation of libraries, as is done in the case of schools of design ? "I think that very important ; the principle upon which the grants of the Privy Council for education are made would be an excellent principle to be extended to libraries ; namely, that in any district where a certain amount of local contribution was raised, for the purpose of founding a library, a Parliamentary grant should be given in aid."

A trifling grant would suffice, and would do a great deal of good. The point was pressed home by several questions. A small grant, he thought,

would be of very great service indeed, and would be found to be a powerful stimulus to local effort. He thought another means by which libraries might be encouraged, would be by promoting national interchanges of books.

The public library world is still looking for that small grant, and rural libraries in many districts cannot be established without some such help. He thought that if local libraries were established, great accessions would be made to those libraries by donations. Do you approve (Q. 363) of the principle of that part of the Copyright Act which directs the compulsory delivery, by authors or publishers, of copies of every book published within the United Kingdom for the benefit of certain libraries ?

The Legislature having repeatedly affirmed the principle that books should be contributed by authors and publishers in aid of public libraries, it may, perhaps, be thought undesirable to re-open the question, but I must say, that in my individual opinion, such enactments are based upon a bad principle ; I think the growth and increase of public libraries is a national object, and ought to be met by national funds, and that no tax ought to be levied upon a section of the public for the benefit of the whole of the public.

He emphasised this by saying that least of all upon the producers of books would he levy this tax. It used

to be eleven copies of every book and still stands at five. It is an oppressive tax, he urged, especially as some considerable portion of the books so exacted go to libraries which are not public. This injustice upon publishers exists at this day. Questions on the origin of the Copyright Act followed, and he gave two answers embodying in a brief form the history of the Act. Further questions were asked as to which libraries the books exacted by the Copyright Act were sent. The libraries to which these books were sent should involve the right of free access by the public.

A library which accepts a Treasury grant of that nature does most unquestionably make itself a public library, and ought to be considered as a public library, and to be responsible for being such in practice.

Questions on this head applying to some of the Scotch libraries were asked. Later on he said, "I think it highly desirable that there should be public depositories of all books which appear in the United Kingdom, but that being a national object it ought to be done at the national expense." He was then asked a question bearing on the annual value of books published in the United Kingdom, and put in a return showing this for the previous ten years. Question 389 asked if there were any fiscal arrangements which he deemed to be impediments to the formation of public libraries, he answered :—

I think there are many, and I will instance as the first of those, the import duty upon foreign books. I believe that to be a most unwise and impolitic tax. It has been considerably reduced, in relation to certain classes of books, but it is still an oppressive duty, and one which operates materially to the enhancement of the price of foreign books; it amounted in 1841 to £8,500. I believe it now amounts to a considerable sum, so that it still operates greatly to increase the price of foreign books. The present duty has been computed to be equivalent to an *ad valorem* tax of twelve per cent. on the average. In no other country, so far as I am aware, has so heavy a tax been levied upon foreign books.

Other questions dealing with import taxes upon books and advertisements in different countries followed.

In reply to the question (403), can you offer any suggestion with regard to the increased utility of existing libraries? he said:—

I think the step which lies at the threshold of all improvement in this respect is an entire revision of the conditions on which the Treasury grants are accorded, requiring that accessibility should be made an indispensable condition of such grants, and that the libraries receiving them should be placed under some definite supervision and responsibility. I think it would be very desirable also that any existing libraries, which are disposed to place themselves under the inspection, for example, of the Committee of Council on Education, which is perhaps the body most analogous to that Ministry of Public Instruction, which I hope we shall have some day, should be enabled to do so; and in case of their own resources being deficient, that they should obtain some grants under the Committee of Council in aid of those resources. I think by that means great improvements would in time be effected. But I believe, looking at the difficulties which some of the best of the few libraries which do exist in this country are in, from inadequate resources, that at present no improvement of any important amount can be hoped for, except upon the condition of Parliamentary aid being extended to them, in cases where public utility is clearly seen to be promoted by those existing institutions. I think, too, such aid should especially be afforded, with regard to the preparation of catalogues, upon which the utility of libraries entirely depends, scarcely any of the existing libraries having now any resources at all by means of which catalogues can be printed and published: and unless catalogues are printed and published the libraries themselves can never be of great public utility.

The remainder of his answer referred to the catalogues of Aberdeen and other university libraries. He said he would make the preparation and printing of catalogues a great State object. Two questions followed respecting the catalogue of the books in the library of the British Museum.

Did he think the present system of requiring recommendations before granting admission to the use of libraries necessary? "I was strongly of that opinion formerly, but upon thinking of the matter more closely, and making a comparison of the results of what occurs here, and what occurs abroad, I am inclined to change that opinion, and to think that the system is not really necessary, though

probably if very free accessibility were granted a revision of the existing regulations, and some considerable modification of them would become necessary."

Questions as to the injury which had resulted from unrestricted admission were put, and later he described his interpretation of unrestricted accessibility to mean the absence of any formality of recommendation or introduction, so that any one can go into the library and call for books without producing any warrant or ticket. This, as he explained, would involve a reading-room.

Yes. I conceive that, although practical experience shows great injuries to have resulted, in some instances, from unrestricted access . . . such injury has arisen from the want of good regulations: for instance, persons have been allowed to help themselves to books from the library.

He thought that there would be no difficulty whatever in the granting of such free access in the large provincial towns, but had some doubts as to whether it would be practicable in London. Questions followed as to the accessibility of catalogues in the continental libraries. He was asked as to the time taken before a book could be served in the great continental libraries. In the National Library of Paris he received books within half an hour of applying for them, but not always. The printed catalogues of that library he described as being far from perfect or adequate. As to the British Museum he observed that all men of letters would, he believed, acknowledge that the accessibility was never so great, and the service of the establishment was never in such order, as it then was. He was asked if he was of the same way of thinking as Dr. Pertz of the Berlin Library, that there is no greater waste of money than to print a full catalogue of a library. He said: "I would listen to everything which fell from him with great respect, but at the same time I would feel no hesitation in confuting that opinion". Asked if he thought it desirable that books should be lent out, he answered that he thought it very desirable, and that no greater boon than the institution of lending libraries could

be conferred upon men of letters and students. Any injurious results which had arisen could be obviated by better regulations. By these he meant with respect to the period for which books were to be lent, and by insisting upon some voucher for the respectability of all persons applying to borrow books. A reasonable amount of wear and tear must be of course admitted.

Did he think (Q. 441) that persons seeking to borrow books should be called on to show their inability to consult them in the library itself? He replied:—

I have heard that advocated as one means of checking abuse, but I do not think it would be expedient, especially with reference to persons who are engaged in literary tasks of considerable extent and duration. It is most important to allow them to have books in their own studies at home, and I think they ought not to be called on to show that they are absolutely incapacitated from coming to the library, because they cannot, in the library, use books to the same advantage as at their own homes.

In the next question he was asked if he thought that the practice of lending should be restricted to such books as are possessed in duplicate by the respective libraries, and answered that he thought that ought to be so with regard to the great libraries then existing, but hoped to see new lending libraries established especially directed to that object.

The number of duplicates and triplicates in the British Museum was inquired into.

Was he of opinion that libraries ought to be open during the evenings, particularly in a country like our own where the day is devoted to labour?

I think it would be a measure of great expediency and of great benefit, and that it would enable the working classes of the population to get access to the public libraries, who, unless some such change is introduced, must continue to be debarred from access to them: and I think it would also, in many cases, be of great advantage to professional men, and even to men whose profession is literature.

He could not give one instance in England of the application of that principle to any considerable library.

It was desirable to enlarge this part of his evidence. He thought that it would be of the greatest value that there should be accessibility during the evening to public libraries.

I believe, even apart from the direct instruction which may in that way be brought within the reach of the people, the means of rational amusement, which would by that means be opened to them, would be exceedingly important. I believe the want of some provision, from the public resources, of amusements of a rational and improving character, has led to the introduction, to a large extent in our towns, of brutalising and demoralising amusements. In my opinion, something ought to have been done long before to obviate that evil, and the necessity that something of the kind should now be done is very urgent.

All friends of the public library movement should note the emphasis with which this part of his evidence was put forward. The heart of the movement lies in the facts here stated, and no other witness examined, so fully and clearly placed these needs of the people before the committee.

In the way of definite supervision and responsibility in the management of public libraries, he said: "I think the most desirable thing, and a thing I am not hopeless of seeing in England, will be a department specially charged with public instruction, dealing with all the relations of Government to public education: then I think the supervision of libraries would naturally be one of the attributions of that department".

Friends of education are still looking, after a lapse of fifty years, for that department of public instruction. Perhaps in another fifty years the nation may succeed in securing it, and then possibly we shall not have the contemptible farce of a minister in the House of Commons poking weak jokes at some aspects of educational matters.

Mr. Edwards said that he did not refer to pecuniary responsibility, but rather to a sort of periodical inspection as to the condition of libraries, with the power of revising their regulations, and making recommendations, with a view to increase their public usefulness. He was of opinion that increased interest on the part of the public,

and an increase of the contributions, would accrue from the making public of the accounts and the general working of public libraries.

Just before the close of that day's examination he handed in his "Approximate Statistical View of the Principal Public Libraries of Europe and of the United States of America". This is printed in the appendix to the blue book and covers fifty pages. The statistics are a wide elaboration of the tables prepared for his paper read before the Statistical Society. The enormous amount of labour represented by these statistics can only be known by those who have attempted a similar task. The additional notes and figures given in the blue book add value to these tables. They were accompanied by explanatory letters and a full list of his authorities. The insight shown by him into the whole subject, and the broad grasp of every detail, are matters of wonder to-day, if this evidence of his is carefully perused. The library world will yet see carried into effect some of the practical suggestions made by Edwards in 1849. Truly was he a prophet with prophetic vision.

In his diary for that memorable day he makes the simple entry, "Gave evidence from half-past twelve till after three". It would weary the reader to give the entries until he was next called. There was not a day when he was not at work. The revising of the proofs of the evidence was Edwards' work. On 5th June he enters, "At twelve attended committee on libraries and was examined at considerable length—satisfactorily I think, in the main; but not at all so on the important point of catalogues . . . which I must try to mend".

On 5th June, 1849, Edwards was further examined. The time occupied in obtaining books at the British Museum was gone into minutely. Some angry readers had been airing their grievances in the newspapers.

Other details connected with the British Museum were gone into, and occupy four pages of the report, but for the present purpose it is not necessary to call attention to them here. Fuller particulars of the rules and regula-

tions respecting access in vogue in continental libraries followed. He had, since his previous examination, been collecting information respecting the parochial libraries founded by Dr. Bray and the "Associates of Dr. Bray," between 1704 and 1807. The most complete details ever gathered respecting these libraries were given by Edwards in the return which he then presented. The statistics fill six pages. Then he gave a little history of the origin of the movement to establish these libraries. A table of the cathedral libraries in England and Ireland was also presented. A series of questions ranging from 3353 to 3378 followed respecting catalogues. He insisted that it was upon the catalogue the utility of the library depended, and that for this reason the catalogues of public libraries should invariably be printed. Did he think that catalogues of public libraries should be alphabetical or classified?

That is a question to which I have given much study for many years, and the result of the best consideration which I have been able to give to it is a most decided opinion that classified catalogues are far preferable to alphabetical; and with the permission of the Committee, I would enumerate some of the reasons why classified catalogues appear preferable to alphabetical ones. In the first place there is the obvious advantage of presenting a great many books, upon the same subject, to the reader who consults them. It is true that many persons may find it more easy to use an alphabetical catalogue than a classified catalogue, with the principle of the construction of which they have no special acquaintance; but I think that the purposes of an alphabetical catalogue can be better answered by supplying the classified catalogue with an alphabetical index of authors' names, than you can answer the purposes of a classified catalogue by putting a classed index to an alphabetical one. There is a general notion that classification involves great difficulty in the preparation of a catalogue; but the difficulties that attach to any system even of alphabetical catalogues are very great, so that it is only a choice between difficulties. I think, too, that in respect to classification, very much might be done, even by what may be termed mechanical arrangements, to simplify the use of such catalogues.

He believed that the catalogue was the eye of the library. Would it not facilitate the preparation of the catalogue if the books were placed before the compositor under a glass

case, and the compositor were to set up the title in print in the library itself? "I am afraid that idea could not be practically carried out to any great extent, because, in order to catalogue books, it is not enough to see the title-page. A great deal of bibliographical knowledge is requisite to catalogue a large number of books. A man must refer not only to the book itself, but to many others. For instance, all early books require a great deal of research, and merely mechanically copying the title would not answer the purpose. In fact, many books have no title-page at all. A mechanical arrangement of that kind might be useful, but I do not think it could supersede the necessity of literary, scientific and bibliographical knowledge on the part of the persons employed."

Reference was made to the City Library of Bristol and an old library at Norwich. Then the import duty on foreign books was taken more fully into review. Question 3387 was: Have you any suggestion to offer with respect to the formation of new public libraries?

I think, generally speaking, advantage ought to be taken, wherever it is possible, of existing libraries, as the foundation or nucleus upon which larger collections might be based; but in answering the question I would divide what I have to say with regard to different classes of libraries. I think, first of all, there are the libraries that we need in the capital cities; next to these are the libraries that are needed in provincial towns; and then there are the village libraries, the formation of which ought to be encouraged in rural parishes. Those seem to me to be three classes of libraries which ought to be separately looked at. With respect to London it is of the highest importance that there should be at least two new libraries founded, strictly of a public kind, and such as should keep pace with the progress of literature, in addition to the library of the British Museum, and that they might with great advantage be adapted to a different class of readers, so as in some degree to draw away from the reading-room at the British Museum certain of what I may venture to term, in a literary sense, the less important class of readers. . . . With regard to provincial towns, particular attention ought to be paid to the literature of the locality, a sort of topographical character ought to be given to them. Most of our great towns have no libraries at all that can in any proper sense be termed public, so that what has to be done there is entirely from the beginning. It would also be important that the claims of country parishes should not be overlooked; an entirely different class of

libraries is needed there from those which are required in the great towns, and I think the plan which has been already suggested of itinerating libraries eminently deserves the consideration of the Committee; the adoption of that plan has certainly done great good in Scotland, and I think it would be worth trying whether it could not be brought into operation in England.

Particulars were given of the probable cost of a library say of 20,000 to 30,000 volumes. He estimated the cost of a library of good character of that magnitude at 10s. to 12s. a volume. The import duty upon books then existing must be kept in mind in comparing this with existing average prices. Some tables and returns referring to the British Museum were presented by the witness. Special libraries for particular districts were then reviewed. He subsequently addressed a long letter, dated 23rd June, 1849, from 5 Cunningham Place, St. John's Wood, which entered at length into the question of catalogues, both as it applied to the compilation of the catalogues and the printing of them.

On 13th June, 1849, he "called on Ewart who read me an outline of proposed report". On the 18th he was at the House of Commons, ". . . saw Brotherton who spoke to me about Salford Library". His evenings at this time were occupied with the correction of the proofs of the evidence. The days bristle with his activities for this report. On 7th and 14th June he breakfasts with Ewart and discusses report. "I proposed," he says, "two or three additional clauses which he asked me to draw up and send him." Like entries follow. On 6th August, "Very unwell". For 7th August, "Letter from Ewart acknowledging pamphlets and speaking very confusedly about Report. . . ." On 29th August he left for a little holiday, and on 31st August he is at Niton, and has a "long and delightful ramble". Truly Niton should become the Mecca of the library world.

The September, October and November diary is full of entries of a like character to those already quoted.

On 19th December, 1849, Ewart wrote, “ . . . I quite agree both as to the dignity and policy of a brief notice only of our assailants. They cannot cross our trenches. Our position is too good and we can overlook their sharp-shooting. . . . You have most generously (given) time and profit in a manner which ought not to be forgotten.” There are still existing some fifty-five letters, during 1849, from Ewart to Edwards.

The year 1850 opens with, on 2nd January, a “letter from Ewart asking me to come to Elstead”. On 5th January he is with Ewart at Elstead, and records, “pleasant confabulation with Ewart on libraries and politics. Read ‘Verifier’ on journey down. . . .” On the following day, which was Sunday, there was “a long and very pleasant ramble through deep snow. In evening, chat with Ewart—*de omnibus rebus*, etc.” There was a trouble about the foreign returns, and the diary shows it at this time. On 25th January he lends *Modern Painters* to Miss Ewart, and for the day following he enters, “Letter in *Athenæum* to-day signed ‘C.’ . . . and praising ‘Verifier’ as one who ‘deals in facts!’ He may be said to deal in facts as gipsies are said to deal in children, first stealing and then disfiguring them to make them pass for their own.” The stress and strain of his life at that time comes out rather pathetically.

A second Parliamentary Select Committee was appointed on 14th February, 1850, to report on the best means of extending the establishment of libraries freely open to the public, especially in large towns. The last paragraph of the report of this committee endorses the statement of the committee of the previous year, that this country is still greatly in want of libraries freely accessible to the public, and would derive great benefit from their establishment. Edwards was the first witness examined, and this was on 7th March. For that day he enters, “Note from Ewart as to attendance in committee-room, etc.—sent him rough draft of some questions as to 1 (statistics, broad results only) and 2 (catalogues)—in event of attack on these points—to

House of Commons . . . when I underwent a long examination chiefly from Lord Seymour who had evidently been both prompted and drilled—very illiberal and paltry questions were put as to salary, as to enquiries at Foreign libraries, etc., but, I think, no real damage to main question at issue".

He was, he said, appointed to his position at the British Museum at the end of January, 1839, specially to be employed on the new catalogue of printed books. His remuneration in 1850 was £164 per annum and a fraction. "It requires," he said, "some calculation to tell the precise sum." A number of questions were asked respecting the British Museum, and much light was thrown on the manner and methods there in operation. Take the evidence on the whole, the British Museum showed out well in the inquiry. Some defects were acknowledged. The average cost per volume of books was inquired into, and some of the answers to questions in the inquiry of 1849 were again traversed in order to elicit additional information. He thought that he had known the British Museum Library as a reader from 1833 or 1834. The evening opening of the library at Bloomsbury, and a great variety of other issues affecting the library, were surveyed. The use which the witness had himself made of the National Library of Paris was inquired about. The losses in the French libraries had evidently disturbed the minds of some of the members of the committee. The statement had been made that out of 250,000 volumes in the library at Rouen above 200,000 had been carried away. The witness entirely doubted the statement.

The measure of accessibility in German libraries was again traversed, and the use of national libraries by women, for the purpose of consulting the books, was referred to. It was asked whether the mutilation of books was not more to be dreaded than the abstraction of books. In reply he said:—

No doubt of it, and the subject requires great care and caution. At the same time I would say, that where the attendance of readers is

numerous I think it operates as a sort of mutual police, and that where there are many persons present injury or depredation to the books is, perhaps, less likely to happen than where the access is restricted to a few. I believe we have found that with our art collections: that the greater the number of persons who are allowed to come to them, the less the injury which is done.

He held to the opinion that the reading-room of the British Museum was very accessible. He further stated that a vast number of the popular works of the day were written or compiled in the reading-room of the British Museum. Many other questions respecting this national library were put to the witness. The number of prohibited books in the libraries of Italy was inquired into. He said that a large proportion would not be accessible to the people, though the library might be accessible.

In my humble judgment the only force of a statement like that which has been referred to, just lies in the strong contrast which there is between the highly civilised and the highly intellectual condition of this country in most respects, and its comparative paucity of public collections of books freely open to all the world.

Let the croakers who think that every country is better than our own rub that into their understanding. Prohibited books in the libraries of Italy included a great number of the best works of all countries, and were only allowed to be read by licence. Mr. Ewart asked whether he thought that the very advancement in the condition of the people of this country would be an additional reason for their having more books instead of fewer, and that they have fewer whereas they ought to have more according to their intellectual state. "Precisely," said Mr. Edwards, "and I think that very superiority of condition which we may without arrogance claim in many respects which is confessedly allowed to us, is a reason why we should be in a better position than we are with respect to Public Libraries."

Some other questions respecting continental libraries finished that day's sitting.

There were several interesting questions at the end of

that day's sitting. Mr. M. Milnes asked (Q. 362) : Have you any objection to state what has been your principal object in taking so much pains in the investigation of libraries . . . ?

I have for many years contemplated a work upon the economy of public libraries. I began to collect the statistics of libraries as far back as 1835, and I have since, at intervals, continued my inquiries by getting the best information which I could from official documents and other sources.

Have you therefore collected all those materials with so much labour and diligence solely for the purpose of placing this subject as fairly as you could before the public ?

Decidedly ; and also in the hope that, humble as my station is, I might do something to advance what I believe to be an important public question, namely, a better provision of libraries for public use in this country.

Mr. Ewart said : Perhaps you are aware that ten years ago I called the attention of Parliament to this subject ?—Yes. (Q. 365) And that Mr. Panizzi gave some very valuable information upon it ?—Yes. The next question and answer (366) are given together. Continuing, the Chairman said :—

And the year before last I gave notice of a motion upon the subject ; and then by chance seeing an advertisement of a pamphlet written by you upon it, not having the pleasure of knowing you, I wrote to you and asked you if you could supply me with information, which you very readily did. Is not that the origin, in fact, of a great part of the inquiry and the evidence laid before the Committee ?—With one exception, that it was not an advertisement which you saw, but you had done me the honour to read a paper which had been published in 1848 in the transactions of the Statistical Society.

Then the last question (367) referring to this point and put by Mr. Milnes was : “Therefore in all the information which you have collected upon this subject, and for which we owe you so much in this Committee, you have had no other object in view except that of benefiting the public ?” Edwards answered “I hope not, and believe not”.

The committee sat again four days afterwards. The bearing of the circular letter of Edwards to the foreign

libraries asking for information was inquired about. The questions asked may be given here:—

1. How many Libraries accessible to the public are there at —?
2. What are their proper designations?
3. When were they respectively founded?
4. Under what regulations or restrictions are they publicly accessible?
5. How many persons have frequented them respectively, for the purposes of study, during the last twelve months?
6. By what funds are they supported, and what is the amount of their endowment, if any?
7. Who are the present librarians?
8. What is the present number of volumes in each: distinguishing printed books from MSS., and also distinguishing the number of tracts or pamphlets, as nearly as the same may be known?
9. What is the average annual increase in the number of volumes?
10. Are books lent out from the library: and, if so, under what regulations?
11. What is the total number of volumes so lent out during the last year?
12. Is there reason to believe that this privilege is abused, and that books are lost, or are wantonly injured?
13. Do any printed catalogues, either alphabetical or classed, of the contents of any of these libraries exist? If not, is it intended or desired to print any such: and if any, on what plan?

That represented the main part of his examination on that day. Other witnesses were examined. On the 21st March he was again called in and examined. Questions had arisen with regard to the accuracy of some of Mr. Edwards' statistics. He said on the day named, "No one is more conscious than I am that they contain many mistakes and many omissions; but it is utterly incorrect to say that they were carelessly compiled; they were compiled with very great pains and labour: that is within the knowledge of many persons who did me the favour to assist me in the preparation of them". Before the tables themselves he placed this prefatory note: "I cannot hope that I have not committed many errors: those, however, who are best acquainted with the difficulties which beset enquiries of this nature will regard these errors with some indulgence; and for any information tending to their correction I shall at all times be very thankful". He further said in connection with this point:—

I think it is fair that it should be borne in mind that I thus expressed my conviction of the comparative imperfection of those statistics at the very outset of this enquiry; and the evidence that has been adduced

this year is confirmatory of that remark of mine, showing how very conflicting the statements are which appear to be authoritative, and to come from quarters upon which it might be expected that reliance could be placed.

This question as to the reliability of his statistics was evidently one which had disturbed the minds of some of the committee. The chairman said that although perfect accuracy may be exceedingly desirable in statistics of this nature, it is scarcely attainable, and that it is as desirable to make as great an approximation to accuracy as possible. Mr. Edwards had, in framing his tables, endeavoured rather to underestimate than to overstate the number of the books, and when he had conflicting statements before him he was in many cases rather inclined to take the lower statement in point of numbers than the higher.

A number of further questions were asked him respecting certain details given in previous evidence, Lord Seymour being especially anxious to find the weak places in Mr. Edwards' figures. The title given to his tables was "Approximate Tabular View of the Number of Libraries containing 10,000 Volumes or upwards, accessible to the Public in the several States of Europe".

Questions followed on the international exchanges of scientific and literary works, and his examination closed with the general impression created in his answers respecting the working of the British Museum. The general tendency of his evidence was, he claimed, favourable to the British Museum.

The appendix contains a copy of a letter from Edwards to Ewart, dealing again with the degree of reliability attaching to his statistics. The letter covers seven pages, and he surveys the details given for the various countries with additional information. The supplementary returns and particulars cover a large area, and the general trend of them is to show that he had understated rather than overstated the number of individual libraries falling within his statement, and the aggregate number of books in the several libraries.

The fact should be noticed here, that the greater comparative accessibility and number of continental public libraries, which Edwards so persistently urges, must have been used as a kind of argumentative lever rather than as a matter of strict fact. It is very extraordinary that the continent should have been found by Edwards to swarm with freely accessible libraries in 1849, while, as a matter of fact, there are hardly any at the present time, save royal and university libraries, which are in many cases by no means open to all.

The excitement in the whole library world over these Parliamentary inquiries was considerable. In the *Sera-pem* of 15th January, 1850, a letter appeared addressed to the editor, extending to eleven pages. To take even a reasonable view of it, the article is a spiteful attack on Ewart, Edwards and the committee. One sentence reads as follows:—

... Mr. Ewart was the one who set the task. Now, so far as I am aware, this individual was not driven to this work by any particular vocation or special knowledge of libraries; I do not believe that he had, at that time, ever seen any other large library, but he is a Radical, that is to say, one who knows everything and therefore must naturally improve everything. He has already instituted other Committees, or at least taken part in the same, ... and therefore must do the same with regard to the Museum and Libraries. As I am advised, he is a remarkable fellow, who really knows as much about collections of books as about statesmanship, and that is nothing whatever—but he keeps an amanuensis (of course of the same political colour), who foists on him the task and materials, and inspires Mr. Ewart just as well for the salvation of the inhabitants of Birmingham in their need for libraries, as for all other statesmanlike ideas.

Edwards is the amanuensis referred to, and is further spoken of as the “560-times interrogated Edwards,” and is described as the “great unknown,” and that “he merely occupied the position of a temporary worker at the British Museum, paid by the week”. Other pretty phrases are used.

It is not necessary to quote more of the article in this present instance. Ewart and Edwards attributed it to Panizzi’s influence. In the same publication for 15th

May, a reply from Mr. Ewart is printed in English, and is a clear and dignified answer to the several charges. No new movement ever yet was without enemies, and the agitation for the passing of the Library Act was by no means an exception to the rule.

#### “VERIFICATOR” AND EDWARDS.

In the issue of 1st September, 1849, the *Athenæum* printed the first of a series of three notices on the Report of the Select Committee. Five columns are devoted to the first of the articles. “This is one of the best blue books connected with literature that Parliament has given to the public for a very long time,” is the verdict of the writer of the review. “The Report abounds in sensible recommendations. . . . There are few traces of hurry . . . and the witnesses are generally ‘up’ to the mark on the several points on which it was thought that their evidence would be found of public service.” This is useful testimony. The maps given in the blue book had evidently struck dismay into the writer’s mind. The point that Edwards had repeatedly emphasised, that no country was richer than England in private collections, and none was so poor in those which belong to the public, is pushed home by the writer of the article. “Our libraries are unequal, not only to the wants of the public generally, but to the wants (and that is worse) of the great teachers of the public, our literary men. . . . When libraries such as the committee recommend shall be—as they *should*—as numerous as barracks and union workhouses throughout the land we shall be glad to see the hours of access extended to the evenings, and the system introduced of lending books liberally yet cautiously.” These few extracts will serve to show the character of the whole of the three articles. The *Athenæum* rendered signal service to the movement for the establishing of public libraries by its able and sympathetic review.

The second notice prints a good part of the evidence

given before the committee by M. Guizot, who was at one time Minister of Public Instruction in France, and more lately an Ambassador to London. He described minutely the working of the public libraries in Paris and the provincial libraries of his country. M. Guizot's evidence throughout was deeply interesting. His view was that even books which chanced to be stolen from a lending library were not morally quite lost. They would be likely to confer good upon the one who neglected to return the book. British librarians to-day are not likely to take so generous a view of borrowers who do not return the books belonging to the library. In the third article the evidence of Edwards is quoted in which he referred to the delay at the British Museum in making the new publications accessible to the public.

In the same journal a letter appeared on 27th October, 1849, signed "P.S.W.". The writer of the letter calls attention to some of the defects of the Bibliothèque Nationale of Paris. He says that he is slavish enough to prefer the restrictions of the British Museum to the freedom of the Bibliothèque. The letter is to the point throughout, and gives very neatly the other side to the full-coloured picture of Mr. Edwards.

On 17th November, the first letter signed "Verifier" appeared. These letters were written by the late Thomas Watts, who was then employed in the British Museum Library, and later became Keeper of the Printed Books. He begins his criticism by saying that the statements, made before the committee, had received a good deal of publicity in the press, and he was induced to believe that some researches he had made had tended to show him that they were not deserving of the credit which they had received. He first attacks the maps supplied by "Mr. Edward Edwards of the British Museum, the first and most frequent witness before the committee". The Paris map shows a number of proprietary libraries, but in the map of London the libraries of a corresponding character were not shown. This was manifestly not only unfair, but laid Edwards open to the charge of not putting forth

his case with strict regard to accuracy. Mr. Watts fired his heaviest gun first. Edwards suffered, as so many enthusiasts suffer, from the tendency to prove too much from statistics. His case was strong without there being the necessity for adding to it the burden of the mountain of figures which were put forward in Edwards' "Approximate View of the Principal Public Libraries of Europe and the United States of America". His line of fortifications was too long, and "Verifier" had ample ground for the vigorous and well-aimed attack which he made upon it. Edwards' main statement was that London and the large towns of the provinces were shockingly behind the capitals of the continent, and the provincial cities and towns, in the provision of public libraries freely accessible to the public. The statement was unquestionably true. That the use actually made of this book provision of the continent was not as considerable and as universal as it might have been, was barely touched upon by Edwards. His array of statistics in the "Approximate View" is enough to send dismay into the mind of even a confirmed statistician. It is the statistics which "Verifier" criticises. To the main lines of Edwards' evidence, as given before the committee, Thomas Watts scarcely refers. With the public of that day it must have seemed a case of the doctors differing. Both disputants were engaged at the British Museum, and it is impossible to rid one's mind of the feeling that there was a degree of captiousness about the onslaught of "Verifier" which did not go down to the heart of the question. It is not necessary to traverse the whole argument, and to some it may seem a rousing up of dry bones which cannot serve any useful purpose. But there is no doubt that "Verifier's" attacks told powerfully in a certain direction. Edwards himself felt the force of them keenly. Mr. Watts did not touch a worthy note in his side of the argument. Edwards' term was "approximate" in these statistics which were given as an appendix in the Parliamentary Report, and do not affect in the least degree the main avenues of Edwards' evidence. Make the witness

appear untrustworthy is a plan as old as the very existence of the Law Courts, but while it may be pardonable for the holder of a brief to adopt this case in doing the best for his client, the method can scarcely be defended on the same lines when it attaches to such a vast and important subject as was then before the country. Thomas Watts' microscopic criticisms were no contribution to the discussion of the subject "Should there, or should there not, be a provision of public libraries in the country on municipal lines?" He unwisely passes over the universal absence of freely accessible libraries. It does not require a genius to pelt at a range of figures referring to libraries. The statistics of any dozen libraries in the universe could be riddled into nothingness. There was something constructive about nine-tenths of Edwards' evidence before the committee. There is nothing constructive about Thomas Watts' fourteen columns of grape-shot. Here is one sentence from the first letter as a sample of others.

It may be deemed a pardonable blunder that the city of Mentz is assigned to Hesse Cassel instead of Hesse Darmstadt, but it is somewhat singular that Mr. Edwards did not detect in time for his second edition that the famous convent of Alcobaça in Portugal is not, as he represents it, situated in Spain,—and that Vich in Catalonia belongs to Spain, not, as he represents, to France. The errors in his next branch of information, the date at which the libraries were founded, are still more serious—or rather still more ludicrous—for we find it stated in both editions, with the most perfect gravity, that "the oldest of the great libraries of *printed books* is probably that of Vienna, which dates from 1440,"—when most of his readers probably remember what Mr. Edwards, with his frequent publications on the subject, has so unaccountably forgotten, that the earliest printed book with a date was issued in 1457, and the earliest without one, probably not more than seven years previously.

Poor Edwards! The nation was practically bookless so far as accessibility to the public was concerned, and the weight of this fact is overlooked, and he is told that he has put a place in Spain which he should have placed in Portugal. Furthermore he is charged with giving the date of the foundation of a library of books as prior to the invention of printing, as if that had anything to do with

later collections. What was the exact purport of these columns of criticism is not now known. Some book published about that time gave the population of London as 1,900,000. Mr. Watts complained that Mr. Edwards "quietly sets it down at two millions". Let everything by all means be whipped into strict accuracy. But in discussing the features and qualities of a large edifice, it would not display any marked distinction by complaining that the panes of glass, in the small window of a cellar, were out of proportion. The last article in 1849 of "Verifier" dealt chiefly with catalogues, but here there is no occasion to follow him.

The correspondence was continued through the early part of 1850. The only reply of Edwards' that appears occupies less than two columns in the issue for 29th December, 1849, and is dated from 5 Cunningham Place, St. John's Wood. It is not a strong reply. He had clearly followed the line of argument adopted by his opponent. "It must have been," says Edwards, "intensely painful to him to have had to bestow so much time and labour on trivial matters and incidental personalities having so remote a bearing on those public objects and aims." He said that he was preparing a new edition of his "Approximate View," and in this there should be an answer to the charges of inaccuracies made by "Verifier". A long time followed before this became possible. Motives must not be looked into, but Edwards may have been desirous not to jeopardise his position at the British Museum. Thomas Watts was promoted later to be Keeper of the Printed Books. He deserved an earlier promotion, for he was an extraordinary and original man. Let it be noted with satisfaction that Edwards did not seem to have cherished any grudge against Mr. Watts. In every reference which he makes to him, in his writings afterwards, the tone and remarks are always of a kindly and appreciative nature. With all his asperities Edwards was of a forgiving disposition. Some of the letters of Thomas Watts in the years prior to the inquiry are interesting reading.

Mr. Robert Cowtan, a fellow-worker at the British

Museum, wrote to Edwards on 21st September, 1849, ". . . There are those at the present day who can and do appreciate your disinterested and indefatigable labours in the great and glorious cause of popular education . . . but it is the future generations who are now being brought under culture . . . who will have the greater cause to thank you".

#### EDWARDS' "LIBRARIES AND THE PEOPLE".

The paper on this subject appeared in the *British Quarterly Review* of 1st February, 1850. This was a few months before the vote in the House of Commons, and being printed in such an influential magazine it could not fail to have carried great weight with legislators, and in preparing the way for the struggle in Parliament.

It occupies some twenty pages. The writer of it has satisfaction in noting that the review in which his paper was printed was, if he did not mistake, the first among the literary journals of this country to call attention to public libraries and to the comparative view of the accessibility of books, both to the scholar and to the people in different countries.

He refers to some of the evidence given before the commission by M. Guizot and others. Again he drives home the fact that no country was so rich as the United Kingdom in private libraries, and that no country in Europe was worse supplied with public libraries. His own statistics presented to the commission are mentioned, and then in a footnote, in which he says:—

These statistical tables have been attacked with much more asperity than force, in some anonymous letters. . . . The critic deals rather in assertions than proofs: and in correcting trivial errors and oversights has committed grave mistakes of his own. The principal features and broad results of the "Approximate Statistical View of Public Libraries in Europe and America," remain unimpeached. . . .

His survey of the monastic libraries is sympathetic, as it always was. At that time books were being issued in Great Britain, Germany and France at the rate of some twenty thousand annually. "When persons," he says, "unaccustomed to the sight of a great library visit one

for the first time, they not unfrequently inquire: 'Are all these books read?' Nor is it always easy to convince them that the books which no human being, at least in these days, would ever dream of reading, are precisely those which it is most important that a great national library should possess, or that the more extensive such a library is, the larger will be the proportion borne by mere 'books of reference' to the aggregate numbers, and the larger also its proportion of 'trash'." For educational libraries "selection will be far more important than mere numbers". Newspapers were then beginning to take a large place in the reading of the people. In America, he remarked that the reading of newspapers incited to other reading, but in this country they superseded it. Were Mr. Edwards now alive he would probably have to reverse this view for the respective countries. Even were Parliamentary aid obtained, the people would require to depend mainly on their own exertions. Salford, Warrington and Glasgow were doing fairly well in the way of voluntary gifts of money for books. Church and parochial libraries, he notices a little farther on, often contain rare and valuable books, but such libraries were circumstanced somewhat as was the man who was rich in lace ruffles and had no shirt. He closes his paper with a powerful appeal for the removal of the duty on the importation of foreign books. The last sentence in the article is:—

We trust that Mr. Ewart will not allow the coming session to elapse without urging upon Parliament the entire removal of these obnoxious imposts. To him the country is already under deep obligation for untiring efforts to amend the laws, to diffuse education and culture, and to promote in various ways the social and economical well-being of the people. In respect to measures of this practical nature, few men in Parliament have done so much. And the time, we hope, is rapidly approaching when labours such as these will hold a far higher place in public opinion, than the most brilliant gladiatorial displays in the cause of party schemes and party interests. We wish to see a larger portion of our libraries really public, and brought into a nearer and more healthy relation to the people. We desire, also, to witness vigorous efforts, like that at Salford, on the part of the people themselves, to form new libraries on a sound and permanent basis.

Modest man, he says nothing of his own efforts!

## CHAPTER VI.

### WORK AT MANCHESTER, 1851-1858.

The management of these libraries has been made wholly independent of sect, party or clique in religion or in politics. Their permanence has been made in like manner independent of charitable gifts, or of fluctuating subscriptions.

—*Memoirs of Libraries.*

A VERY influential Local Committee had been formed in Manchester for the purpose of establishing a public library and adopting the new Public Libraries Act. Subscriptions to the amount of nearly £13,000 had been raised, and with this sum the new library was to be organised. Edwards was selected as librarian and adviser to the committee, and he aided materially in securing the adoption of the Act, almost unanimously, in 1852. He was naturally very proud of securing the appointment of first public librarian at Manchester, not only because his position at the British Museum had been determined, but doubtless because such a post would give him an opportunity of carrying some of his ideas into practice. It was in May, 1850, that he received his last cheque from the British Museum, consequently he was free to take up another appointment. On the 18th of May he made this entry in his diary, "Breakfasted with Mr. Ewart—who spoke to me very kindly on Museum matters—offering to talk with Sir R. H. Inglis thereon. He also offered me a cheque for £30 which I gratefully declined—at least at present. He spoke to me as to the difficulty of rendering me any efficient assistance as to new employment in his position as an independent member of Parliament, but assured me he would gladly do anything that might fall within his power." The friendship at this time of George

Bullen of the British Museum was helpful to his disturbed mind. The same may be said of the goodwill of Robert Cowtan, who was also at the Museum. Bullen seems to have realised that Edwards' continuance at the British Museum was undesirable in the interest of his own mental comfort and prospects. Interviews and correspondence with Ewart were constant. The Parliamentary Committee had not yet finished its work, and Edwards was busy in preparation for his final examination. On 15th June, 1850, he was on his way to a friend's house and records that he "met Ewart who gave me note enclosing cheque for £50 to defray printing and other expenses which I have incurred in the course of libraries committee". He lost not a moment's time in paying away a good part of this cheque on his mother's behalf. On 20th March, 1849, he had received from Mr. Ewart £15 towards the expense of reprinting his pamphlet on "Paucity of Libraries". In the autumn of 1850 he had spent all his money and was in need of more for household expenses. Some expected remittances due for contributions to the *Atlas* newspaper on the British Museum, National Gallery, etc., had not come to hand, and he with great reluctance applied to Ewart, who sent him on 26th September, 1850, £15 as a loan. These three payments, making a total of £80, are all that can be traced of money received from Ewart or other wealthy friends of the library movement, for the ceaseless labour and endless time and thought he had devoted to the work of promoting the establishment of municipal public libraries. Naturally he could not afford to give his labour to the cause, as could Ewart and others. The first £15 which he received was practically all paid away at once by Edwards for printing and postage, and £65 thus remains as the sum total of the pecuniary reward given him for unrivalled services in an important public cause. He did not receive anything for expenses as a witness before the committees. On page xix of the 1849 report a list is given of those who received payment, and the

amount in each case. No list is given for 1850. He so scrupulously enters in his diary his income and expenditure, that it is reasonable to suppose he would have entered any sum received as a witness. Government servants can scarcely be compensated for giving information in a Government inquiry, and, apart from this, inquiries at the Treasury have not led to the discovery of any payment to him as a witness.

Often he had to battle with poverty, and yet he was too proud to ask for adequate recompense for honest and devoted labour freely given to a great cause; resting content to see his labour credited to, or appropriated by others, and going forth chiefly as the work of the political heads of the movement. Whether to deplore Edwards' unnecessary modesty, or censure Ewart for resting content to be served by Edwards on such inadequate terms, must be left to the judgment of the individual reader. The postages alone upon the correspondence, pamphlets and books sent to Ewart and others must have been no small item and could not have been covered by the £15 named. No man was ever more willing to spend his own scanty earnings, or even to be exploited for the good of the commonwealth, than was Edwards; but, after all, he was not called upon to undertake intense mental labour, and give help of measureless value, largely to enhance the reputation of a rich man who took a prominent place in public life. True, during most of the time that Edwards was helping Ewart, he was an assistant at the British Museum, and received for his labour the princely stipend of £164 and a fraction a year.

The writer has searched every available record for details of some evidence of public recognition or generosity towards this man who prepared the brief for public libraries, but beyond the sum of £80 already mentioned, there is no trace of any kind of adequate reward.

On 1st July, 1850, Ewart first spoke to Edwards about the prospects of a librarianship at Manchester, and from this date there are frequent references in his letters and diaries to the opening likely to present itself there. At the end

of the same month he called upon Brotherton, who received him very kindly, and "promised to give his zealous support to my application for the librarianship at Manchester". On 29th July he enters quietly in his diary, "Libraries Bill passed this night, forty-nine against fifteen". On the same day he wrote to Binney, W. J. Fox, Kershaw, the member for Stockport, and to Ewart, asking for testimonials for his Manchester candidature, and it is clear from this that there must have been some talk about Manchester being likely to adopt the Acts very soon after the passing of the library law. Each of these wrote, and the letters are among the papers and correspondence discovered by the writer, and as they have never before, to his knowledge, been given in print, they are here quoted:—

Ewart's letter is dated, "Folkestone, 31st December, 1850":—

It gives me both very great pleasure and very sincere gratification to bear my testimony to your fitness to fill the place of Librarian to a Public Library. I believe that there are few persons in England so well acquainted with the management, regulation and contents of all existing libraries. I know indeed that your attention has for many years been devoted to this important subject. And I am the more disposed (perhaps the more competent) to speak on it, because I was most materially assisted, as chairman of the Parliamentary Committee on Public Libraries, by your extensive experience and unremitting zeal. I will only add that all I have known of your private character is in every respect favourable. Sincerely wishing you success, etc.

There is a postscript. "I observe with satisfaction that there is an article in the *American Almanac*, for the coming year, on your 'View of Public Libraries'."

Dr. Binney wrote from Glasgow on 23rd August:—

I greatly regret not having been able to write to you before I left London—and still more so, that my constant movements in the highlands interfered with my previous purpose. I was anxious to express my wishes for your success in respect to the Manchester Librarianship. I should be glad for your own sake to hear of your obtaining an office so congenial with your tastes and habits, and for the duties of which your employment in the British Museum must have peculiarly qualified you: while for the sake of the projected Institution itself, I wish you may succeed, as I think you may be of

great use, from your knowledge and experience, in connexion with a library in the course of formation. If it was in my power to forward your object, I should give my assistance with the greatest alacrity, as I feel that I could do so with entire confidence; and, indeed, I would add, that if you thought this note could be used by you to the least effect, it is quite at your service for that purpose.

James Kershaw wrote from the House of Commons on 31st July:—

I beg to say how much gratified I am by the information that you are a candidate for the office of Librarian to the new library about to be established by the Town Council of Manchester. I entertain a high opinion of your qualifications for such a post; and it will give me great satisfaction to find that you are elected to the office.

William J. Fox's letter is dated 30th July:—

From my personal knowledge of Edward Edwards, Esq., and of his services, I am strongly convinced that he would be a most valuable acquisition, as librarian to the new Library about to be established at Manchester, or to any similar Institution.

A delightful week was spent in August of 1850 by his wife and himself at Kenilworth and the neighbourhood. The holiday was enjoyable to both, and Edwards must have enjoyed himself like a boy fresh from school, as they had several boy relatives with them part of the time, and went on nutting and blackberrying expeditions with them. In the middle of the month named, he went to Manchester to help on his candidature for the appointment as librarian. He immediately went to see the projected library, and found it "a capable site but in a dense neighbourhood". After this brief visit to Manchester he returned to Kenilworth, and records several nutting and blackberry expeditions with some boys. Happy the man who can become or remain a boy! On 27th December, 1850, he went again to Manchester at the invitation of the Mayor, Mr. John Potter, to help him with the preliminaries in the formation of the library. The appointment of librarian had not then been made.

On the following day he records that he was out before ten o'clock and obtained the plans of Campfield Library from the borough surveyor. During the day he had

interviews with the Mayor and the Bishop of Manchester on library matters, and in the evening he dined with Mr. John Potter, the Mayor. The three last days of 1850 were busy days to Edwards in Cottonopolis. On 1st January, 1851, he had 4s. 4d. in his purse, and at the end of that year, £16 10s. 9d. to carry forward to 1851. He had expended for "my dear mother and sisters for the year" a very considerable sum. On New Year's Day, 1851, he dined again with the Mayor. A week later he writes, "Attended public meeting at Campfield (Hall of Science), to organise the Manchester Free Library: Mayor presided and the meeting went off spiritedly". On 10th January, at the meeting of the Town's Committee, Edward R. Langworthy proposed, and the Bishop of Manchester seconded, the appointment of Edwards as librarian at a salary of £200 a year. There were other motions, one that £100 and one that £50 more than this sum should be paid, but both were lost. Two days later was Sunday, and Edwards enters in his diary, "To church at Bowdon (a noble old church, looking all the more beautiful for its Christmas decorations)—when I repeated my grateful thanks to Almighty God for bringing me thus far into a new sphere of labour—praying that in it I and mine may have His Divine blessing, and that I may have strength to perform my new duties as in His sight".

Truly this man, with all his failings, had a devout mind. His appointment at the British Museum had come to an abrupt ending, but Manchester, the first of the great new family of municipal libraries, which he had done so much to bring into existence, had opened its arms to receive him. Every minute detail had to be seen to by himself, and he and the committee, whose efforts he was to direct, had no model which they could follow. The library stationery forms, shelving, heating, furniture, everything had to be thought out by him. The buying of the books was a huge task. All that the compilation of the catalogue meant at this time, when so much of the work was simply a groping in the dark, is only known at

this day to the immediate chiefs of the Manchester Public Library. The turmoil of bringing into form and shape the first municipal public library appears very plainly in Edwards' diaries at this period. Only the merest fraction of these entries can be quoted. Readers belonging to the library world can fill in a good deal for themselves. There was no mould out of which the parent institution came, no precedents to be followed and no model to copy. Everything had to be patiently hammered out bit by bit : woven with as much care as Manchester bestowed on some of its choice textiles. This was, perhaps, not the best task which could have fallen to the lot of Edwards, but he settled honestly to the work. Several men are still alive who shared some of the labours of those days, and they remember Edwards and his part in the task with more than a kindly interest. Mr. William James Paul was secretary of the Working Men's Committee, which collected money to the extent of £800, and had much to do in educating public opinion upon the question. He says, in a letter to the writer, "I was closely connected with him from the time of his engagement to his retiring, and a more hard-working, amiable gentleman I never knew". Mr. John Chadfield was under Edwards for three years as a boy in the library, and "always found him a courteous gentleman". Alderman Harry Rawson, a Manchester worthy, and Mr. John King, "jun.", now over eighty, were members of the committee during part of the period covered by Edwards' librarianship. Mr. Benjamin Chadwick was another of Edwards' library boys. These several gentlemen are still living, and all look back along the years, and rejoice, that they had some part in the establishing of the public library, then an entirely new municipal institution. One of these gentlemen tells a story of how a boy assistant was carrying an armful of books in the Manchester Library with his cap on. The librarian threatened to box the lad's ears if he did not take off his cap. A boy with his cap on in a library could not, evidently, in Edwards' estimation, be respectful to the books.

William Ewart wrote from Folkestone on 13th January, 1851 :—

I heartily congratulate you and rejoice in your success. Make the most of Manchester. It is a rising place. Be content to rise with it. “Spartam nactus es, hanc exornia.”

My brother had been putting in a word for you at the new Liverpool Library. But the salary there will be only £100. I must say that you and I have great reason to rejoice at the result of our exertions. Have we not planted for posterity? An honest boast may, in such a case, be pardoned.

I hear of a Library and Museum being formed at Winchester. But not a word in consequence of the 50 copies of the Act I lately sent to the Mayors of as many Municipalities. No new Returns. I will write or speak of them in Town: whether I go for the season to-morrow. But theological animosity will obstruct public business and public good.

The book buying was a serious task, and later some time was spent, by Edwards and James Crossley, upon this business. He records the receipt of one letter from a firm of Manchester booksellers, whose name he gives, of which he says, “These gentlemen had thought fit to write me a letter on the strength of former transactions on my own account, and for my own literary purposes, in which, after promise of zeal for the library interests, they offered me in addition a discount for myself”. Edwards replied that price and good condition were the only recommendations that would influence purchases.

A librarian has just as much right as any other citizen to have political opinions, but it is not a wise proceeding to give expression to them to the members of a library committee. Very early in those days Edwards talked politics with the Mayor, and Mr. Potter called him “a radical of the Cobden school”. Later he drew up some electioneering literature at the suggestion of the Mayor. This is mentioned in order to urge upon librarians the wisdom of not mixing with politics. A librarian should not know any public politics; he is the servant of all parties. The Bishop of Manchester was a regular attendant at the meetings of the Library Committee, and

had ideas of his own, which he expressed, as to how the catalogue should be prepared. His plan was to write the book titles at once in MS. volumes, thus avoiding the use of slips altogether and adopting one alphabetical arrangement, without indexes, but with copious cross-references. The book sub-committee had to thresh out the question, and, as it was a thorny one, some soreness was left in the mind of the librarian.

Some very matter-of-fact letters referring to library matters had occasionally been written by Edwards on Sundays during these busy days. In 1876 he adds this note in red ink to one of the entries of that period—"I look now in retrospect on these repeated entries of correspondence, etc., on Sundays, with the sincerest sorrow and compunction. It seemed at the time to have very plausible excuse, but it had really none whatever. It was altogether wrong and utterly condemnable." He had a tender conscience. During 1852 he had frequent consultations with Sir John Potter, for knighthood had come to the Mayor, about the opening ceremony, and he conferred with him about an advance in his salary to £300, but the Mayor was afraid that nothing could be done. Manchester never has been half liberal enough in the remuneration given to the chiefs of its library staff. On 20th August, 1852, he records, ". . . Visited each polling-place thrice to-day and made up returns. At four with Sir John Potter to Town Hall. Final aggregate return thus. For, 3962. Against, 40." Manchester had thus by an early adoption of the Act of 1850 started a little craft on its way which was destined to become a great fleet. A Library Committee appointed by the town council was forthwith appointed. All the work up to this, already described, had been done by the Town's Committee. On 6th September, 1852, Edwards makes the simple entry, "Free Library first opened to the public for reading . . . there was necessarily great crowding and noise: but on the whole the demeanour of the visitors was exemplary". Next day he sent collections of papers

and documents about libraries to one correspondent at Oxford, and to another inquirer who had written to him for information. These early years bristle with such inquiries. They must have been a severe tax upon his time and patience. Then, soon after the opening, he took three weeks' holiday, part of which he spent in the Isle of Wight, at Niton, and other places. It is worthy of note that there was only six weeks between the opening of the Manchester Free Library and that of Liverpool.

In 1854 he seriously felt the pinching caused by his small salary, and in the autumn of that year Potter hinted to him that, to use Edwards' words—"it would be better for me to seek to obtain something better". At the end of that year his cash in hand to carry over for the following year was 8s. The present writer would like to inscribe these sentences about Edwards' agonising days and nights, caused by insufficient salary, in such a prominent way, that every member of a public library committee would be bound to read them.

On 22nd March, 1854, Ewart wrote:—

... You must excuse me for referring (I know you will take it as it is meant) to a passage in the Manchester Library report. I gave notice of a motion for a Select Committee *before* I had the advantage of seeing your pamphlet on the question. Indeed, in the preceding session; and, on the estimates, several sessions before. I think that from your report it would seem that these proceedings had been the consequence of your work which in truth I read afterwards. I mention this for the sake of exactness.

On 24th March there is this entry in his diary: "Wrote Ewart with suggestions on his amended Libraries Bill, on proposed digest of the foreign returns, and correcting his misapprehension on a point incidental to Committee of 1849".

Ewart wrote on 27th March, 1854:—

... You will, I think, find the essential part of the amendments you suggest embodied in the new bill. I had left the amount of the leviable rate unlimited. Sir B. Hall thought it safe to limit it to a penny, so therefore it stands at present. Still, the extension to a penny will suit many places. . . . There will, I daresay, be an opposition

(verbal only) to the bill. But I trust it will be purely, or mainly, Sibthorpiian. Sibthorpe intends to propose that we should give a power to purchase *Punch*. So at least he has hinted. . . . In what I said about an incidental point, I meant that the idea was long in my mind, and indeed expressed in motions recorded in Hansard long previous to any intimation *alunde*. Any light you can throw on the establishment or proposed establishment of new libraries will aid me much. The *Times* in a recent article coldly hints that we have not succeeded.

In the first and second reports by Edwards there does not seem to be any remark bearing particularly on the committee of 1849. Other entries in the diaries about this time are—25th February (1854): “Drew up address to the Burgesses of Birmingham on proposed poll for introduction of Library Act into that town . . .”

30th March: “Revised draft Petition for Amendment of Libraries Act. Drew up some notes on Free Libraries, and wrote Mr. Wright, of Stockport, Mr. Gradwell, of Ormskirk, Mr. Leader, of Sheffield, and Mr. Tovey, of Bristol.” On 25th October, 1854, Ewart wrote: “. . . It must be a great satisfaction to you to witness the result of your many labours on this subject”.

On 22nd April, 1855, Dr. Binney preached in Manchester “a most impressive sermon. . . . May God in His infinite mercy bless to me this word of instruction—lead me in humble penitence to seek mercy through Jesus Christ and by the mercy of His atonement, and bring me and all those who are dear to me into humble submission to His Divine will and into devout preparedness for all that may be within His providence concerning us.” In 1855, he sent £35 12s. to his mother, and he had 2s. 11d. in hand for the new year. During 1855 there are in his diaries, during the last six months, frequent references to his *Memoirs of Libraries*, which he had then begun. In the following year there was another fruitless application for an increase of salary. It must, however, be remembered that the movement was a new one at this time, and the library had some enemies in the town council, who were ready to pounce upon any weak spot in its administration, so

that it is not improbable that they would have resisted an increase of the librarian's stipend. Visits were made to the library by leaders of local opinion in other districts, and information was freely given as to methods and results by Edwards, so that he and his library became the veritable schoolmaster and schoolhouse of the public library movement. During 1856, and the year following, he catalogued the library of Lord Willoughby de Broke, at Compton Verney, for which work he received over two hundred pounds. On 5th August, 1857, he spent part of his holiday in Devon. He writes in his diary—"Had a delightful walk from Torquay by the cliffs towards Babacombe, but the pleasure was interrupted by a fall over the cliff, occasioned by my own awkwardness (I was reaching over to pluck a wildflower), and which might have lost me my life. The brushwood saved me under God's good providence, and I have to be grateful for preservation in the greatest peril of the kind I have yet met with. May the life thus graciously preserved be amended and the lesson be turned to the right account." On 14th December he attended a meeting of the Library Committee which he describes as "a most pitiable exhibition of crass ignorance and puerile vanity". The catalogue was the source of trouble. A neighbouring proprietary library had produced a catalogue on the cheap, which Edwards says "was a disgrace to all concerned in it". Both the compilation and the printing were poor. Some of the committee desired to follow the same lines for the catalogue of the Reference Library, and it is certain that the librarian resisted it with vigour. It is not a wise thing for a librarian to tell his committee that they do not know anything of books or practical library administration. Such a statement might be true in some cases, but the librarian should lock the knowledge in his own heart, and refuse to let it be drawn from him on any pretext. The first librarian of the first municipal library under the Act of 1850 overlooked this prudent course, and suffered in consequence. It was openly said in committee that the librarian was habitually

disrespectful, and, if he taunted the members with ignorance, any other committee would probably have said the same thing. Alderman Harry Rawson, who was for very many years a member of the committee, says, in a letter to the writer dated 21st September, 1901:—

When in 1856 I first became a member of the Committee of the Manchester Free Libraries—Edwards was the chief Librarian. Of his unique knowledge and great abilities, my colleagues and myself had a high opinion. But, unfortunately, we differed on certain matters of administration. No doubt we may have been—probably were—somewhat too exacting; and he was hardly as ready to fall into our views as he might have been. He was proudly defiant, and we perhaps needlessly impatient, not making sufficient and reasonable allowance for his peculiarities of temperament and disposition. Poor fellow, he deserved a better fate than an old age of indigence and neglect.

On 9th June, 1858, Edwards makes this entry in his diary, “The (Town) Council to-day had the almost inconceivable fatuity and folly to pass this resolution on the motion of. . . . Resolved that . . . the committee be requested to procure an analysis of the number of readers in the several libraries with their occupations and pecuniary resources so far as may be found practicable.” This illustrates some of the spirit then prevailing. Edwards’ view is shown by his words, “The incomparable Dogberry who proposed and carried this resolution was very nearly foisted on the libraries committee by . . . in November last”. The various indiscretions and disagreements culminated in an open rupture between committee and librarian, and in the end Edwards was asked to resign. On 9th July, 1858, he received a copy of the resolution passed by the committee, that he be “again recommended to resign his office as librarian,” and on 6th October the council resolved, “that the appointment of Mr. Edwards as chief librarian be, and the same is hereby, cancelled, and that he be paid such sum, as shall be equivalent to any notice, to which under the circumstances he may be legally entitled”. Later he received £125 in addition to the salary due. Before the end of that month Sir John Potter

died, and Mr. R. W. Smiles was appointed chief librarian. Edwards made visits to the branches to take leave of the staff, and received some kindly words. One member of the committee, who had not always been friendly to Edwards, said that he would at any time travel 100 miles to serve him. His successor, Mr. R. W. Smiles, wrote on 6th October, 1859, as follows:—

I was very sorry to learn the other day, on my return to the Library, that I had missed your visit; and my regret has been aggravated by the receipt of your favour of the 30th ult., from which I may reasonably doubt whether I shall have the pleasure of seeing you at all, for an indefinite time. I am sure that I should have realised both enjoyment and profit from a little conversation with you on divers matters: and I should certainly have liked, on the occasion of your leaving Manchester, to have uttered my humble, yet very fervent, "God bless and prosper you". It would have become me also, as a citizen of Manchester, to express my grateful sense of the inestimable value and importance of the public services you have rendered to the community. Will you allow me to assure you that the traces left here of your labours, and the spirit which inspired them, have deeply impressed me with this feeling of the gratitude due to you? I must be pardoned for the lapsus of speaking of "traces" of your *labours*. I should rather speak of the great monument of them which you have reared, and speak of the "traces" of your "*spirit*," as many, and distinct, and of such a character as to excite feelings of honourable envy in my own mind. I cannot doubt that many—very many—besides myself, are ready to accord you the "niche" here to which you are so well entitled, and which very few men could have so thoroughly earned.

You should not have troubled me by expression of thanks, etc., I should have been greatly grieved if I could have thought it possible that you would hesitate to command any little facilities we could afford you in your literary labours. You, more than any living man, know the character, contents, and value of these tomes by which I am surrounded, and it would be an unworthy and barbarous thing to obstruct you, of all men, from the freest possible use of them compatible (alas for the necessary qualification!) with the character and objects of the Institution. Rely upon all of us here doing most cheerfully (as literary hacks or otherwise) anything we may at any time have it in our power to do for you.

The plan of the catalogue is at length settled, it is to be on the model of the list (modestly so-called) just out, of the books of reference in the Reading-Room of the British Museum—with this difference that we shall have six alphabetical groups and six indices of subjects. I can afford to say to you that I am gratified by this result for various

reasons, and among others that it is favourable to rapidity of preparation for the press. Again and most cordially expressing my desire for the best happiness of you and yours, and thanking you for the magnanimous kindness which I have received at your hands for the last twelve months.<sup>1</sup>

The reports of the library during Edwards' librarianship are models of what such reports should be. The first is dated 30th June, 1851, and is signed by Edwards. It extends to twelve pages, and opens with a record of various lists of books which had been sent out to booksellers. These lists cover a wide ground, and are drawn up in a way which shows their practical utility. Accompanying the report is Edwards' draft-list of books proposed for purchase. This is printed on one side only, and various bibliographical particulars, such as size and date of publication, are given, with blank columns for prices and condition. The list covers over 280 pages, and embodies the various sections of literature. It is a masterpiece of bibliographical knowledge. The second report is dated 19th October, 1854. It is in two parts, a public report, and a special report for the committee, on the preparation and printing of a classed catalogue. The committee content themselves with this paragraph, to which a page is devoted :—

The Free Public Library Committee report: Your Committee have received the annexed Report (and Appendix) of the working of the Library during the past year, prepared by Mr. Edwards, the principal librarian, and which your Committee have much pleasure in submitting for the information of the Council.

The library world might well return to first principles in the matter of reports. In most of such documents there is far too little of the librarian and too much of the committee. The question of library reports is a very important one, and the Manchester Libraries Committee would render good service by republishing the reports of Edwards, or such parts of them as will be helpful to present-day librarianship. The third report covers forty,

<sup>1</sup> The original letter is in the possession of Dr. Garnett, C.B.

the fourth over sixty and the fifth forty pages. The reports are in terse and polished English. The two chief librarians who succeeded Edwards benefited largely in the preparation of the catalogue of the reference books by the work of their predecessor. It is only fair to Edwards to record that, in 1861, the then chairman of the Libraries Committee, Alderman John King, jun., was the prime mover in an attempt to have Edwards back to finish the catalogue. He had an interview in London with Mr. King, and Edwards expressed his entire willingness to accede, and also the great satisfaction which he would feel in undertaking the task. Mr. King did not succeed in carrying the proposition, but it is pleasing to note that all the members of the committee, who were members when Edwards was librarian, voted for his being engaged to complete the catalogue. The business men of the committee had allowed their desire for economy to get the better of their judgment. The catalogue, instead of costing all told a modest sum, was run up, Edwards says, to upwards of £1,600, and is a monument of what to avoid in cataloguing reference books. In the report printed for private circulation at the end of 1857, Edwards says:—

... Against such "cheapness" I most respectfully protest as illusive. From the windows at which I write this letter, I periodically see a practical illustration of "economy," falsely so-called, which, humble as it is, thrusts itself into my mind as elucidatory of the topic in hand. One of our most constant visitors at Campfield fair-time is "cheapjack". No man can possibly preach "economy" more zealously than he does. He boasts that he undersells everybody. He decorates the subject with all the artifices of practised oratory. If he spoke from well-conned notes he could not speak more glibly; and his invariable theme is "cheapness". But, though his success has been great, it is, I am told, short-lived. His knives are attaining an unfortunate reputation for not cutting; his crockery succumbs to the slightest casualties; and his customers are getting convinced that to buy a better article at a fair price is the true economy. I hope we shall not at this stage of the business be induced to deal with "cheapjack". . . . I should be willing to undertake the preparation of the MSS. and correction of the proofs at the rate of £2 per sheet, and if the committee should be pleased to entrust me with this duty, it would be my most earnest study to discharge it to their satisfaction.

The first part of this extract is a very homely thrust against the economic tendencies of the committee. The latter part is indicative that the librarian was willing to give up the whole of his leisure to the task. At the close of his appointment, Edwards entered into a partnership with a Manchester firm of booksellers and printers, but the partnership did not last long.

In 1865 Edwards was a candidate for the chief librarianship of the Guildhall Library. Lord Macclesfield then wrote to him from Shirburn Castle, Tetsworth, 13th February, 1865:—

Dear Mr. Edwards,—As I hear you are a candidate for the office of Librarian to the Corporation of London, I trust you may succeed in obtaining a post for which your Bibliographical knowledge and literary experience so well fit you. I have great pleasure in speaking highly of your qualifications, as the manner in which you carried out the arrangement and cataloguing of my library gave proof of your ability and perseverance.

Mr. James Crossley also wrote from Manchester on the same date:—

I wish you every success in your application for the Librarianship to the City of London. I hope, that in addition to your testimonials, you will be able to interest some of the influential persons, with whom the appointment rests, in your cause, for testimonials, etc., as I well know, however strong they may be, will not carry a candidate through without some one on the election committee strenuously to back them. I enclose my testimonial, which I have great pleasure in sending. I have not addressed it, as I do not know exactly who are the electors. Probably this will not matter. I am much obliged by your Synoptical View of the Records, and am glad to see you turning your attention in that direction. . . . I shall be glad to hear how you are going on in reference to this application.

Among the remaining books acquired by the writer, which belonged to Edwards, there is a copy of Heber's *Life of Jeremy Taylor*, published 1824, in two volumes. On the title-page Edwards has written the following note: "This book, with many others, now in my possession, and much valued by me, and which, I hope, may one day (after my death) pass on to a *Free Town*

*Library*, . . . came from the Library of my late friend, James Crossley. To him it came from the Rev. John Mitford, a true book-lover."

There is also in the book the following note made by Edwards: "N.B.—That this book is so nicely bound (as I love to see books: for, most truly—

. . . That book doth share the glory  
That, *in gold clasps*, locks in the golden Story,)

is due *not* to 'James Crossley' but to his old acquaintance, 'John Mitford'. Crossley cared nothing whatever for the 'condition' of his books, provided the 'Edition' was the right thing:—did not even care whether they were dirty or clean. He possessed about thirty thousand volumes, but possessed scarcely sixty book-shelves. Most of his books were arranged, warehouse-fashion, *i.e.*, in *rows* upon the floors of various rooms, between two of which you passed (when going either to dinner or to bed) as between two files of soldiers. Mitford, on the other hand, patronised the binder, and made his ancillas learn how to use 'dusters'.—E.E."

Whilst reference is being made to Manchester, one of several letters written to Edwards by Mr. William E. A. Axon, LL.D., will suitably find a place. Mr. Axon has been a friend of public libraries for a long term of years, and has rendered yeoman service to the extension and development of these institutions. On 13th October, 1867, he wrote:—

. . . Permit me to say . . . that I was not aware until I received your letter that to you we were indebted for the suggestion of Free Libraries to Mr. Ewart. For this information I return my warmest thanks. . . . Personally I owe you a deep debt of gratitude. What little knowledge I possess has been almost wholly acquired by the use of our Free Library, which placed within my reach those aids to study and research which but for these institutions would be quite inaccessible to poor students like myself, and I am endeavouring to show my sense of the benefit conferred upon me, in a way which I think will meet with your approval—by advocating the establishment of these libraries throughout the land.

There were few obituary notices at the time of Edwards' death. The fullest and best of those which appeared was in the *Manchester Guardian* of 25th February, 1886, written, it is understood, by Mr. W. E. A. Axon. The Manchester library world has a warm appreciation of Edwards. In no part of the country has his memory been kept so fresh as it has in that enterprising city.

The tribute paid by Mr. W. R. Credland, in his book, *The Manchester Public Free Libraries*, is excellent. Under date of 3rd March, 1902, Mr. J. Taylor Kay wrote to the present writer as follows:—

... I loved the man. I was a youthful assistant of his, when the Manchester Free Library Committee did not properly appreciate him, in 1858. I left in 1860 to become librarian of the Manchester Athenæum. I went back, 11th August, 1863 (the day R. W. Smiles resigned the librarianship), to be the Hulme Branch librarian, and acting secretary to the Libraries Committee. ... I have always associated his (Edwards') likeness, 'in my mind's eye,' with that of Lord Macaulay as engraved in the library editions of the 'Miscellaneous Works'. There is a great similarity in the expression of the face, and they were similarly built, being broad shouldered. 'He was very kind to me he wos,' to quote poor Joe in *Bleak House*. I was a short, thin, pale, delicate office lad, and had been a persistent user of the library when he suggested my being an assistant, an offer which I enthusiastically accepted.

One of the first to strike a high note for Edwards' true place in the public library movement was Mr. John J. Ogle, in his book, *The Free Library*, and again in a paper read by him before the Library Association at the Manchester meeting of 1899.

## CHAPTER VII.

### EDWARDS AND PRESENT-DAY LIBRARIANSHIP.

Every man who enters on this calling (of librarianship) may give a powerful impulse to its elevation. It will never open for him a path to wealth or to popular fame. It is, and is likely to be, eminently exposed to social indifference and misconception. But, as a means of permanent usefulness, it presents opportunities which are surpassed only by those of the pulpit or the press.

—*Memoirs of Libraries.*

THE difficulties which surrounded the administration of the early public libraries were numerous and intricate. The then existing libraries afforded little help in the way of garnered experience. The introduction alone of the policy of lending of books for home reading added a new feature, vast in its possibilities, and requiring thought and attention to detail in every direction. When organisations are in full operation, and require only to keep pace with development as the process of evolution makes it necessary, it is easy to lose sight of the early struggles to transform crudeness into workable forms. Doubts and obscurities enveloped the most elementary details of library practice in its early stages, and in all parts of the work Edwards was a pioneer. This fact may be stated with pardonable repetition. In nearly every method for improving the practical equipment of libraries Edwards proved himself to be a far-sighted and extraordinarily successful pioneer. Not only did he lead the way in the great question of making libraries of all kinds more accessible, but he anticipated in a very remarkable manner many of the methods which are now being advocated as the most desirable in advanced library practice.

Chief among these methods is systematic classification, a subject upon which Edwards not only held the most

advanced opinions of his time, but was also the most competent judge of its absolute necessity in a library, by reason of his unique knowledge of systems. He was the first in this country to collect, tabulate and compare the various proposals made for the systematic classification of human knowledge. His labours in this direction, as contained in his *Comparative Table of the Principal Schemes which have been Proposed for the Classification of Human Knowledge*, published in 1855, in his *Memoirs of Libraries*, vol. ii., pp. 761-831, and *Free Town Libraries*—and his remarks upon this important subject—are marked by the most painstaking industry and research. His views on the subject of systematic classification were far in advance of the general opinion in the municipal library circles of his day, and, indeed, also in advance of the prevailing opinion held by a majority of the public librarians at the present time. His paper entitled "Notes on the Classification of Human Knowledge," etc., read on 11th March, 1858, before the Historic Society of Lancashire and Cheshire, and published in the *Transactions* for the session 1857-58, put forward his well-defined ideas upon the subject. Edwards must have had this type of librarian, past and present, in mind when he says in his recapitulatory chapter of *Memoirs of Libraries*, p. 1066:—

It might, indeed, have been added that, if one thinks deliberately, the platitudes on this section of our subject, which are so often heard from the lips of amateur or half-educated librarians—their faces the while beaming with self-complacency—are simply ludicrous. For a librarian to say that he prefers *not* to classify his books, is much as though a cutler were to say that he liked steel best when unpolished; or a sculptor that, for his part, he thought marble was seen to most advantage in the block.

In further support of his belief in the absolute necessity for minute and systematic classification in public municipal libraries, Edwards devised a scheme of his own which was used at Manchester, Bolton and elsewhere, and also, in its broader divisions, forms the system of classification adopted for statistical and other purposes in a number of

libraries at the present time. This scheme is printed in the second volume of the *Memoirs of Libraries*, and is a practical system which is even now, among the abundance of minute methods in existence, well worth study. Its value as a classification method applicable to municipal libraries requiring a scheme for shelving, cataloguing and charging or recording books, is marred by a somewhat pedantic notation, made up of a mixture of Roman and Arabic numerals, the alphabet and certain literary symbols. Thus, to express the subdivision of his Class III.—History, representing “Ecclesiastical History of England generally”—he uses this notation: III. 7, § f i, or III. 7 f i— which is practically useless, save for printing in a catalogue. The scheme has, however, been recently reprinted by Mr. James Duff Brown, librarian of the Finsbury Public Libraries, in his *Manual of Library Classification* (p. 51, 1898), in a form which makes it of practical value for public municipal libraries. Mr. Brown has set out the principal headings and subdivisions, and printed them in conjunction with a simple notation which makes the classification easy to apply and use. The books on the “Ecclesiastical History of England generally,” for example, are represented by the simple symbol C. 7-5, which can be spoken or written, and so used for any library purposes. This simplification of the notation of Edwards’ scheme of classification undoubtedly adds to its usefulness, and renders it capable of being adopted in any kind of library.

The principal theories of Edwards, in regard to the classification of books, are so intimately connected with his writings on the subject of cataloguing, that it is impossible to quote them without repetition, and some of his chief statements on the general subject may with advantage be here reproduced from the *Memoirs of Libraries* (vol. ii.) and *Free Town Libraries*.

There is no matter connected with the administration of a Public Library which can vie, in point of importance, with the character and the condition of its catalogues. However liberal its accessibility, however able its chief, however numerous and well-trained its staff,

however large and well-selected its store of books, it will fall lamentably short of the true standard of a good Library, if its catalogues be not (1) well constructed, (2) well kept up with the growth of the collection, and (3) thoroughly at the command of its frequenters. The first point involves the multifarious questions as to the preferability of classified or of alphabetical catalogues, and as to the relative merits of the various schemes which have been proposed for constructing catalogues of either sort; the other two points entail a discussion of that much controverted question whether the catalogues—on whatever plan constructed—of Libraries which are necessarily in a state of constant growth should be kept up in manuscript or in print. That questions such as these are neither trivial, nor very easy of solution, those will best know who have tried to work them out in practice. But, as Mr. Carlyle has said (after his manner), "A Library is not worth anything without a Catalogue: it is a Polyphemus without any eye in his head, and you must front the difficulties, whatever they may be, of making proper catalogues".

But, if there is to be any hope of general agreement as to what sort of catalogues may reasonably be termed "proper," we must try to set out with some clear and definite conceptions of the purposes which such catalogues are intended to subserve. During the last eight years more space has been devoted to this subject in periodical literature, both British and American, than was so devoted during the preceding eighty. Any one whose curiosity may induce him to 'read up' the discussion, will meet very frequently with a new phrase—that of "finding-catalogue"—which, at the first blush, looks like a definition, but on closer scrutiny will probably be found of small help in the inquiry. In one sense, indeed, all catalogues must be "finding" catalogues, or they are worthless, but the character of the catalogue which, (in that sense), merits the name will depend on the object of the search. For a Librarian who has in hand the stock-taking of a Library, a mere list of the "press-marks," or symbols,—whether figures or letters, or a combination of both,—which fix the local habitation of each book on the shelves, is a "finding-catalogue". For a reader who wants the known book of a known author, the briefest and most skeleton-like of indexes, so that it be arranged according to authors' names, is a "finding-catalogue". Even to a reader who seeks a particular book by an unknown author, a very brief and meagre catalogue will prove a finding one—always under two conditions: the first, that he is already acquainted with the precise words with which the title *begins*; and the second, that the catalogue he has recourse to is arranged according to the *beginning* of the title, and according to nothing else. But to a student who resorts to a Library in order to gain all the assistance it can afford him upon some specific subject of inquiry, no catalogue will give what he seeks unless it be full, accurate, and classified under heads.

In proceeding to discuss the various methods by which these several requirements may best be met, I pass over, for the present, those mere lists or "inventories" which are necessary to the internal arrangement and safe custody of a Library, and restrict the term "Catalogues" to such as are needed for the use of the Public.

Catalogues of books, then, may be drawn up, either, in the first place, according to the topics treated of in the works which have to be catalogued, such topics being arranged in a single alphabetical series—for example :—AARAU—ABACUS—ABBEY—ABBOT—ABEL—ABELARD—ABERDEEN—ABINGDON—ABJURATION, and so forth, as in the well-known *Bibliotheca Britannica* of Watt; or, secondly, they may be framed in accordance with some systematic classification of their subjects—as, for instance, THEOLOGY—PHILOSOPHY—JURISPRUDENCE—HISTORY—LITERATURE—each of these classes being divided, and subdivided, into its several branches and sections; or, thirdly, they may follow an alphabetical arrangement, according to the names of the authors,—when known,—without any regard to the subjects treated of: the anonymous works following as a separate series, arranged according to topics (as in the above-mentioned work of Watt), or according to the *first* word of the title, other than a mere article or preposition (as in the excellent *Dictionnaire des Anonymes* of the learned Librarian of Napoleon, M. Barbier); or, finally, they may be drawn up in one alphabetical series which shall include both the names of authors and the headings selected,—whether according to either of the principles above named or to some other,—for anonymous works, and of this kind of Catalogue there are many examples, some of which I shall have to notice hereafter. . . .

Catalogues on this plan (an alphabet of authors, titles and subjects) certainly add to the merit of making the important distinction I have advocated, the other merit—at least as respects certain students—of requiring no previous acquaintance with systems of Classification. But these merits have to be weighed against grave defects. Of necessity, such catalogues must deal rather with the phraseology of title-pages than with the real subject-matter of books, and therefore fail to bring under one view all, or any near approximation to all, the books they contain on any given topic. In some cases one word will have several distinct significations, and then the reader's search is embarrassed with matter foreign to his purpose; in others, one theme is expressible by several synonymous or convertible terms, and then all these must be turned to, before he can be certain that he has the information of which he is in quest. . . .

The waste of time and the uncertainty of result that cannot but attend the use, for purposes of study, of catalogues thus constructed, will become still more clearly apparent, if we glance, for a moment, at topics which have been treated in many languages and by writers of very various periods: especially if some of these writers have been

subtle schoolmen, or hair-splitting controversialists. Turn—either to the work of Watt, or to any extensive catalogue on a similar plan,—and look at the headings ALTAR—EUCHARIST—HOST—MASS—REAL PRESENCE—SACRAMENT—SACRIFICE, etc. How many titles will be met with under one or other of these words which might, with equal propriety, have been put under any or all of the rest. And yet other, more vague and general headings must also be examined, before the reader can attain a clear conviction that he is fully in possession of the object of his search. . . .

Should any further proof be needed that this alphabetical method is far less adapted to the main body of a Catalogue, than to its auxiliary Index, I think it will be afforded, conclusively, if the reader will once more turn to the book just quoted (Watt's *Bibliotheca*), and glance at that formidable array of serried columns would be almost as alarming as to be doomed to read up the controversy on the "Power of the Keys," or that on the "Notes of the Church". This mass of titles is broken up into twelve divisions, and thirty-six subdivisions: and thus a result is ingeniously attained which at once sacrifices alphabetical uniformity, and fails to realise systematic classification. . . .

Whether the Catalogue to be undertaken be alphabetical or classed: whether it aim at the utmost fulness of information, or at the greatest possible brevity, the difficulties which are inseparable from the task will soon become apparent. Even a mere sale-catalogue, if the vendors are to be honestly dealt with, must proceed upon some sort of *plan*, framed with a view to meet these difficulties, or so many of them, at least, as obstruct a truthful description, how brief soever, of the books in hand. For the Catalogue of a Library, if intended in any degree to subserve study, there must also be a careful identification of Authorship. No such Catalogue deserves the name unless the reader of it be able to find, either in the body of the work, or in the Index, (1,) all that the Library possesses of the known books of a known author, at one view; as well as (2,) all that it possesses, by whomsoever written, on a known and definite subject.

The main difficulties that lie in the way of the identification of Authorship are obviously referrible to three groups of causes: (1) Variations, errors, and ambiguities in the naming or describing of an author, in books the authorship of which is not designedly concealed; (2) the intentional suppression of the author's name; (3) the assumption of feigned names, and the false ascription of books to persons who were not the writers of them, whether for purposes of deception, or merely from ignorance.—*Memoirs of Libraries* (vol. ii.).

The difficulties which attend the choice between the almost infinite varieties of systems of classification which have been proposed are many, but they have been commonly exaggerated. It is too little remembered that *any* really 'classified' catalogue—however defective

and assailable its theoretical 'system'—cannot, in the nature of things, fail to assist and facilitate the researches of a really working reader and student, in a much greater degree and measure, than can the *best* conceivable catalogue arranged according to Authors' names. To know the *names* of all the consultable authors who have treated of a subject is to possess already much of the knowledge which the working student comes to the Library expressly in order to gather. He wants a Catalogue to tell him what authors to read. And he wants not a few books, the authors of which are now known to no mortal. Above all things else, he does *not* want to consult—if the Library be a large one—a hundred, or a hundred and fifty, volumes of catalogue: or to turn over and over—if it be but a small one—the eight hundred or a thousand pages which may intervene between the authors under 'A' and the authors under 'Z'. For an *Index*, on the other hand, the alphabetical arrangement of Authors' names is admirable. For a secondary and ancillary full catalogue—if accompanying another catalogue, of what nature or 'system' soever, provided it be really a Catalogue of the Subjects treated of in books—it is an excellent help. But it is not, and cannot be, a good principle of construction for the sole and independent Catalogue of any Library which aims at an object in any degree higher than that of reading for mere pastime, or for the acquisition of the humblest rudiments of learning.

This would be a strictly true assertion even were the catalogue of Authors kept—as it uniformly ought to be—under a *separate* alphabetical order, wholly apart from the alphabetically (but severally) arranged Headings of anonymous books and of polyonymous books. It can never help a searcher for the known book of a known author to have, in one alphabet of titles, a multitude of the 'headings' necessarily chosen for the entry of *anonymous* works jumbled up with the names of authors. For *other* searchers than those who are seeking for known books, the alphabet of authors is plainly an obstacle, not a help. The clumsiest and worst of all the existing systems of cataloguing books according to the nature and subject-matter of the book—were the compiler of a Catalogue so unfortunate as to select it from the rest—would, at the least, bring under the searcher's eye, at the sole cost and labour of consulting *one* volume instead of consulting a hundred volumes or a thousand pages—between A and Z—the titles of perhaps a hundred books, either treating of one and the same subject, or else relating to, and bearing upon, that subject, more or less closely. This advantage alone would far more than compensate the real toiler at a tough subject of inquiry for half a score of contingent but minor disadvantages, did they really exsist. And it is very far, indeed, from standing alone.

The very disadvantages and uncertainties (be they what they may in degree) alleged to attend upon Classified Catalogues involve, at every step, some *addition or other to previous knowledge*, on the part of the

searcher. If he be led, by the occasionally doubtful partitions and severances of a subject, to turn, now and then, from one class, group, or section of such a Catalogue to another class, group, or section, he acquires, by the very process, some piece of knowledge which he had not before. Whilst all that a man acquires by having to lift perhaps a hundred volumes of Catalogues—‘A,’ ‘B,’ ‘C,’ ‘D,’ etc., and to turn them over from page to page, is a wearied body and a jaded mind.—*Free Town Libraries* (pp. 52-54). [The italics are in his book.]

From these extracts it will be manifest that Edwards had little, if any, sympathy with the alphabetical arrangement of titles and authors' names as in some catalogues. With a complete grasp of the whole subject, and a piercing insight into the manifest requirements which a catalogue should endeavour to satisfy, he dismisses at once the claims set up for any kind of alphabetical catalogue which is not accompanied by a systematic classification and all necessary indexes and other guides. The hold which has been obtained by the “dictionary catalogue,” as evolved from the practice of one of Edwards' successors at Manchester, the late Dr. Crestadoro, and carried up to a certain point of efficiency and thoroughness by the industry and talent of certain American librarians, is to be accounted for by the facility which its form offers for blindfold compilation, and the ease with which it is possible to conceal in a wilderness of alphabet a limited acquaintance with history, geography and subject relationships. It is impossible to approve of any catalogue which does not answer every variety of question which can be put to it, and Edwards was quick to see that a mere alphabetical author catalogue, which might satisfy the scholar or special bibliographer, would be absolutely useless to perhaps 90 per cent. of the frequenters of public libraries. In the whole of his writings on this subject he has anticipated, to a very close degree, the principal features of the recent movement in favour of systematically classed and annotated catalogues of books, provided with all necessary indexes and other practical aids to research. Although a scholar himself, he sweeps aside the claims of the pedantic student working along narrow lines, to receive

a monopoly of consideration, and boldly attacks the theory which many eminent men like De Morgan, Jevons and some of the officers of the British Museum ably held, that author and title catalogues in alphabetical order are all-sufficient for every purpose. As he points out himself, when speaking of the alphabetical author catalogue, "Many a reader has spent whole days in book-hunting which ought to have been spent in book-reading"; and every one who has had the misfortune to rely upon author-alphabetical "finding-lists," of the nature above indicated, will recognise and appreciate the breadth of mind and practical sagacity of Edwards, whose knowledge and sympathies rise above any natural prejudices and convictions he may have been inclined to hold by virtue of his position as a State official.

The remarkable faculty which he possessed of subordinating his own natural inclinations to what he thought to be the general good, is shown throughout the bulk of his writings on library matters. His personal predilections and training should have made him an advocate on the side of those selfish recluses who wish to have libraries strictly preserved for their own use, and who hold in contempt the aspirations of the poor in the direction of culture and literary study. His political leanings towards exclusiveness would also, one is bound to think, almost inevitably predispose him to oppose any movement tending to throw the wealth of libraries into the common possession of the proletariat. His very pronounced tendency in the direction of theological and mystical studies, and his attributes as a kind of nineteenth-century monkish scholar, all combine to mark him out as the very man to cry out, with might and main, against any invasion of libraries by the multitude. Yet, such was the liberal-minded and thoroughly public-spirited nature of the man, that he presents, in the most extraordinary juxtaposition, qualities which combine the essentially selfish characteristics of the monk with the alert progressive spirit of the most advanced librarian. His books abound with passages in which he urges the importance of allowing the utmost

freedom to readers in libraries, and he even advocates the policy of allowing them to have direct access to the bookshelves, in a manner similar to what has always been the practice in the reading-room of the British Museum. He recommends this policy, not as an experiment to be tried by the less timid managers of public libraries, but as a course which should form an integral part of the organisation of every municipal library. These views are only now becoming recognised as vital to the success and completeness of our libraries; but when Edwards first enunciated them, his was as a voice crying in the wilderness. When Edwards organised the Manchester Public Libraries in 1851-58, he introduced a number of forms and regulations which have served as models for many of his successors, and he was one of the first to make a stand against any rules which struck against public rights. In his *Free Town Libraries*, commenting on the doubtful practices of augmenting funds by means of a charge for borrowers' tickets, and the establishment of subscription departments, he says:—

Lending Department.—In one or two of the smaller towns, for example, a payment for borrowers' 'tickets' has been established. This, at best, is an evasion of the intention of the Legislature, even if it be granted that it may, technically, be regarded as just escaping the precise censure due to the open violation of an Act of Parliament. In one or two others,—and in one or two of those which were among the earliest to levy a Library Rate,—a combination has been effected of a 'Subscription Library' with a 'Free Library'. At Bolton such a combination has subsisted for many years. It is less plainly and obviously an evasion of the spirit of the Libraries Act than is the practice of claiming a shilling on the issue of a *ticket* for the use of the Circulating Department of a Free Town Library, but it partakes, undeniably, of the essential nature of such an evasion. It is a union of things which conflict as well as differ. This union of the subscription principle with the rating principle, as far as regards the Town Library of Bolton, was so framed at the outset as to increase its objectionable character. The worst conceivable classification of men (under any circumstances whatever) in relation to mental culture, or to any appliance or appendage of that, is certainly the breeches'-pocket classification. Yet the framers of the subscription arrangement at Bolton were not content with divaricating the readers at the 'Free

Library'—as far as concerns the Circulating branch of it,—into a 'First Class,' consisting of subscription paying borrowers, and a 'Second Class,' consisting of non-subscribers: they must needs have *three* classes, graduated entirely by the breeches'-pocket scale: namely, I. Borrowers of books, who could afford to pay a guinea a year; II. Borrowers of books who could afford to pay only ten shillings a year; III. Borrowers of books who could afford to pay—directly or indirectly—only their share of the Library Rate. The borrowing privileges of each class were made more or less ample, in proportion, exactly on the principle which gives to a First-class railway traveller very soft cushions; to the Second-class traveller very hard cushions; and to the Third-class traveller no cushions at all.—*Free Town Libraries* (pp. 58-59).

As regards the imposition of a charge for tickets or application forms, it is sad to have to chronicle the fact that, in spite of Edwards' vigorous protest, there are still public municipal libraries which persist in making readers pay before they can use the lending library, notwithstanding the very plain declaration of the Public Libraries Act of 1892, and certain judicial decisions against the practice, which have been obtained, both in England and Scotland. In this, as in other important respects, some few libraries have altered but little since 1852, and the fact must be attributed, in a measure, to the circumstance that the teaching of Edwards has never reached the majority of British librarians. When it is considered that only 850 copies of the *Memoirs of Libraries* were printed, and that most of these found their way into the hands of private collectors and libraries, in the United Kingdom, the Continent and United States, it is not remarkable that only a few of the newer generation of librarians should have knowledge both of the man and his advanced ideas. As regards the rank and file of librarians, both in Britain and America, it must be reluctantly confessed that complete ignorance of Edwards' practical work on behalf of libraries is the ruling condition. His *Free Town Libraries* was also a book which reached but a few professional men, and it has only been within the past few years, when remainders of this work, and of the *Memoirs*, were put upon the market, that some

of the more recently established public libraries were able to secure copies at all. Another reason for the absence of knowledge of Edwards' teaching is to be found in the fact that comparatively few modern librarians would ever dream of looking for inspiration, stimulus and practical suggestion from books on library economy dated 1859 and 1869 respectively. Yet, advanced ideas and theories are to be found in plenty by any casual seeker, and it will be seen from what has been previously stated as regards Edwards' professional achievements, that his thoughts and writings touched very closely some of the most important departments of modern library administration.

The same practical common-sense which Edwards brought to bear upon the problems connected with public access, classification, cataloguing and other branches of library work, he also carried to the consideration of library buildings and questions connected with their technical equipment. But on these points his opinions, though sound and sensible, are not quite abreast of the remarkable developments in library architecture since his time, nor has he anticipated to any extent the improvements in labour-saving devices and apparatus which have been introduced by highly trained mechanical specialists.

If every Library in this country on which the public has any fair claim, could be brought distinctly under public view, by a precise and periodical statement, comprising at least these three particulars: (1.) what it *is*; (2.) what it *has*; and (3.) what it *does*; a long train of improvements would inevitably follow. But the systematic inspection of Public Libraries to be effective must be national.

This occurs on page 565 of the *Memoirs of Libraries*. The same idea was advanced at the 1849 inquiry, and the library world is still waiting for that systematic inspection. The present writer is convinced that there will never be a full measure of health and vitality in libraries generally until some central control of this nature is established. The largest and best of the public libraries do not need it, but would welcome it to secure the welfare of the library body politic. But there is a class of libraries, and it is to

be feared that it is not a small one, which seriously need to have light from the outside brought to bear upon their administration. Such libraries are managed in a narrow, illiberal manner, with rules which hamper rather than help the public. The staff is selected without regard to considerations of suitability, training or merit, and every method adopted is of the tamest and least efficient kind. Only national and systematic inspection can alter this state of affairs. His Majesty's Inspectors of Public Schools perform an efficient and salutary work without curbing local aspirations, and similar inspectors of public libraries would be able to carry out an equally useful task in connection with the municipal libraries. But it is plain that no form of public Government inspection would be agreeable to existing library authorities, unless accompanied by some kind of substantial State aid. The present writer must own to being very much in favour of this suggestion of Edwards. To-day the library world is not within measurable distance of its being carried into effect. The best part of fifty years has passed since Edwards made the suggestion, and it has not yet been seriously considered. Edwards in this matter is half a century in advance of current library opinion. The suggestion was a far-sighted one, and all credit must be accorded to Edwards for putting it forward. There should be no necessity for undue interference, and this is the last thing which would be likely to happen. The municipal authorities would prevent any such calamity, and would doubtless obtain an inspection which would secure the best interests of the individual institutions.

Some day it is hoped that there will be found a new source of income. Such a tax as the dog tax might be utilised, as in some parts of America, and the local library might be permitted to receive the tax, providing that its work passed the critical survey of a Government inspector. There is a natural disinclination in the minds of many people to multiply the number of Government officials. But there ought not to be any fear that a limited number of in-

spectors of public libraries would be an aggravation of the tendency towards officialism. The need for some such inspection as that indicated is very pressing in many cases. Such an expert would know beforehand much of the inner working of every public library in his division. He would stand between the library and the contributing public, and decide whether or not the fullest measure of usefulness was being extracted from the library. He would ascertain if the library was in close and effectual touch with the educational work of the district, and if the institution was a due and important factor in ministering to the welfare of the local public. In a word, such inspection would speedily determine if the work done was robust or otherwise. The whole subject is an increasingly important one, and should be brought constantly before the profession, as it is probably more important now than when Edwards first broached it.

He says, in *Free Town Libraries* : "The day will come when in Britain we shall have courses of bibliography and of bibliothecal-economy for the training of librarians, as well as courses of chemistry or of physiology for the training of physicians". The importance of this suggestion will be appreciated by librarians. Such a school, it is hoped, is within measurable distance of being established.

The use of scientific methods of library classification and cataloguing, the gathering together of local literature of every description, was first advocated by him, as will be seen :—

Everything that is procurable, whether printed or MS., that bears on the history and antiquities, the fauna and flora, the trade and politics, the worthies and notabilities, and, generally, on the local affairs of whatever kind, of the parish, town and country in which the Library may be placed, and of the adjacent district, should be carefully collected. . . . If the town or district have any great staple trade, every book and pamphlet relating to that trade . . . should be procured. . . . It will be well to fix upon some main subjects of a general kind in which the Library shall be especially well provided. *What* this subject or these subjects shall be, must, of course, depend upon circumstances which will vary in different places.—*Memoirs* (pp. 573-574).

The libraries which he advocated as the best depositories where gifts of books could be stored and taken care of in perpetuity were municipal libraries, and "those Libraries will certainly be likeliest to have a fair share of such accessions, as combine evident care of the books they already possess with a wise liberality in the arrangements for access and profitable use" (*Memoirs*, p. 606).

Following closely upon this in the *Memoirs* is the question of the distribution to public libraries of selections from the publications of State Papers and books. Allied with this is the subject of international exchanges of books. Edwards had strong views that this plan of exchange with foreign Governments was not only practicable, but would tend to considerable benefit.

To sum up, the following are the features which Edwards advocated :—

- I. Unrestricted access on the part of the public to their own libraries, and artistic and scientific collections in all institutions supported out of public moneys.
- II. Evening opening of the British Museum Library.
- III. Sunday opening of Public Libraries and Museums.
- IV. Lending Libraries.
- V. Systematic and national inspection of Public Libraries.
- VI. Collections of local literature and everything applying to the district where the library is situated.
- VII. The best agencies for taking care of gifts of books, etc., in perpetuity were Public Libraries.
- VIII. The distribution to Public Libraries of Parliamentary papers and books and documents printed at the public expense.
- IX. The systematic teaching of Bibliography.

There is probably no librarian of any country, nor of any period, who can be compared to Edward Edwards for comprehensive grasp of both the literary and the theoretical sides of librarianship. He was deeply versed in

everything relating to bibliography and the history of literary effort, while his knowledge of the libraries of his time was probably unique. But, apart from this, he added to the many gifts of a versatile mind a genuine sympathy with the true seeker after the knowledge stored in books, whether he came clad in broadcloth or fustian. It is so seldom that such a union of admirable qualities is found centred in a single individual, that Edwards may be regarded as one of these rare phenomena which Nature occasionally produces—a heaven-born theoretical librarian and a man of letters.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### HIS LITERARY AND OTHER WORK.

The familiar words, "He being dead yet speaketh," are obviously true of all men who have led (under human limitations) earnest and noble lives. But their full significance never comes out, save when the web of life and of character has been woven of mingled threads, good and ill together, with the darker skein somewhat more than commonly visible.

*—Exmouth and its Neighbourhood.*

EDWARDS put good work in whatever he undertook. However much he was in need of money, he never did anything slovenly. His industry in his work was stupendous. The length of time occupied in the preparation of some of his books would startle many a modern maker of books. Directly he had a subject upon which he was to write, whether it was the *Memoirs*, or his article on the "Post-office" for the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, he began collecting data and notes with a profusion that knew no limit and no weariness. To the library world he sets an example in this respect, worthy of imitation. No trouble was too great for him to take for the verification of a fact, or to give fulness to a statement. His note-books, commonplace books, guard books full of memoranda, which it has been possible to collect, reveal the tireless industry of the man.

He had the true spirit of the man of letters, and was no mere book-maker. No sooner was an edition published of one of his important books than he began to think how he could improve it for a new edition. The printer could never tire him with revises, and upon the printer, all through his work, he was as merciless as an author could be. He lived in an atmosphere of book-lore. A book was to him something more than quires of printed paper

bound within two stout boards, but he was the last man in the world to call a book a book simply because it had the semblance of one. There is not one of his books which shows the marks of undue hurry. Fulness is everywhere writ large. In fact, some of his work was too full, and would have been all the better for wise and liberal pruning. He erred on the side of redundancy. It has been already said that he would never have made a great historian. His leanings and his antipathies were too marked to admit of his taking an impartial view of a subject requiring an exquisite poise of judgment. He lacked in a rather marked way this mental balance. And yet, as already stated, he never allowed what happened at the British Museum or at Manchester to warp his sense of justice, or lead him to write an angry word. Once he loses this quality, and that in the Preface of the first volume of the second edition of his *Memoirs of Libraries*, which will be mentioned presently.

His range of literary vision covered many fields of literature, and he could have concentrated his powers upon several, and probably have achieved eminence. A professor's chair of literature was shut out from him on account of his faults of temper. Coleridge received from Josiah Wedgwood and his brother a recognition of his literary talent, which was capable of producing good work, and they paid him an annuity of £150 a year, as a kind of endowment of his poetic faculty. Could this have been done for poor Edwards we might have had greater literary work from him. It may be argued that the plan did not turn out to Coleridge's benefit. The successful writer of ephemeral literature has his financial reward in his day and generation, but often his death means the eclipse of his literary renown. The greater writers who have done their work, and still do their work in much weariness of mind and body, often in an atmosphere of pecuniary difficulties, achieve posthumous fame as a reward. Most writers would be quite willing to die poor if they could be perfectly sure of reaching this coveted distinction.

In the humble estimation of the writer, the work of Edwards which will live is, first and foremost, his genuine enthusiasm for establishing public libraries in as accessible a form as it was possible to make them ; his *Free Town Libraries*, as the first history of these municipal institutions ; some sections of his *Memoirs of Libraries* ; and his book of the *Monastery of Hyde*. His writings are mentioned in the order in which they appeared.

His *Napoleon Medals* ( $17 \times 10\frac{1}{2}$  inches, 167 pages) and *The Great Seals of England* ( $16 \times 10\frac{1}{4}$  inches), both published in 1837, are productions indicating a very close acquaintance with his subject. The historical and biographical notices are concise and clear. Some of them, it may be said, give a perfect little biography. He begins his introductory remarks to the second named book by saying that "the Great Seals of England have never yet (1837) been given to the English public in a complete and easily accessible form". Considering that he was quite a young man at this time, it would be interesting, were it now possible, to find out where he had gleaned all this information respecting medals and coins. The more it is looked at, the more does it become a little treasury of numismatic knowledge. The hope may be expressed that in one of the library or scientific journals a capable hand will give an analysis of Edwards' work on these subjects.

In 1837 there was published by D. Walther, anonymously, *New South Wales : Its Present State and Future Prospects*. The book passed as the work of James Macarthur, but it is not unfair to say that there is as much, if not more, of Edwards' work as of the gentleman named. Edwards is not acknowledged in the preface. His diaries at the time the book was in course of preparation are full of references to the progress of the book. The book occupies 344 pages. The historical part is mainly Edwards', and this is full of his cherished side-notes and references. Some other parts of the book dealing with Government documents and statistics do not always

contain these side references. "The New South Wales people are woefully ignorant of the history of their colony," remarked a Sydney merchant recently to the present writer. But it may be doubted whether the ignorance of the history of our colonies is not as dense in Great Britain as it is anywhere. Edwards rescued what would have been a bald jumble of statistics and official documents, and turned it into a record of the colony, possessing the qualities of interest and some literary merit. He would be twenty-five at the time the book appeared. The style is concise and not flowery. The history and resources of New South Wales are traversed with care and skill. The intimate knowledge of the colonist Macarthur was supplemented by the youthful freshness of mind which Edwards brought to the preparation of the book.

In 1840 Mr. Edwards published a treatise on *The Fine Arts in England, their State and Prospects Considered Relatively to National Education*. Part I. treats on "The Administrative Economy of the Fine Arts of England". To what extent the State should interfere, or can usually interfere for the promotion of education and for the encouragement of the fine arts, was then a question beginning to be pressed upon the public attention. A wide diversity of opinion existed with regard to it, but Edwards must ever be regarded as one of the pioneers who educated public opinion on these subjects. His instincts and sympathies in educational matters were distinctly on the popular side. It was at this period that the poverty of England in the matter of public libraries began to press itself vigorously upon his mind and attention. He set himself voluntarily the task of pursuing an elaborate statistical investigation of the subject.

The book consists of some 374 pages, and is divided into twelve chapters. Of these, the most important are, "On the Foundation of Schools of Design," another, "On the Maintenance and Management of Public Galleries and Museums," and a third, "On the Encouragement of Historical Painting and Sculpture by the State". This

book is important as being the first literary effort of an ambitious nature to bear his name. In the preface he says :—

The author having been long convinced that the principle of non-intervention on the part of the Government, however sound in commerce, has limits in respect to the Fine Arts, and to Public Education, carried beyond which it becomes a serious evil, naturally felt a deep interest in the proceedings of the Committee appointed by the House of Commons on the motion of Mr. Ewart "to inquire into the best means of extending a knowledge of the Arts and of the Principles of Design among the people of this country; and also into the constitution, management and effects of Institutions connected with the Arts".

This was the committee of 1836 of which Ewart was chairman. Edwards possessed a good knowledge of art, and he had some clear views upon artistic subjects. Whether he adopted the wisest course to give effect to these views, by means of a subscription organisation for the distribution of pictures, is a question upon which opinions will differ. To Edwards the most important result was that the *Times* devoted two special articles upon this book. The first appeared on 3rd September, 1840, and occupied some two and a half columns, and the second followed on the 14th of the same month and ran to the length of one and three-quarter columns. Both articles are headed in prominent type, "Edwards on the Fine Arts in England" and "Edwards on the Fine Arts" respectively, and are given good positions, and printed as "From a Correspondent". This was not a bad beginning for a new writer, and Parry might well congratulate Edwards on securing these notices in the leading journal. The writer of the articles did not agree with Edwards in many of the statements made, but the whole question is discussed in a way that must have been flattering to the writer of the book. The critic leads off by saying: "This little book contains a good deal of thought and information upon an important subject regarding which the country has been hitherto both careless and ignorant". Edwards pleaded for a higher public estimate to be placed on art, and the *Times* writer supports

that claim. This critic says that the "study of the fine arts has been with us until lately almost a disgrace. Men following art or letters as a profession are still looked upon with a kind of pity." Throughout these articles Edwards is constantly quoted. Edwards argued for art to be brought within the reach of the multitude, and his critic took the view that it was the gentlemen of that date who required means of artistic education. This alone illustrates how far we have travelled since that time, and this improvement is largely due to men of the Edwards stamp. The writer closes his over four column criticism by saying:—

He (Edwards) desires that in our public buildings now in progress painters should be employed, deplored the absence of their works in our churches, and in many other places where they would be appropriate and useful. We only mention the heads of the subjects on which he touches, but perhaps these remarks may draw attention to his book, which may bring the public and the Government to think upon matters which they have treated hitherto with such neglect.

The writer was in sympathy with Edwards, but urged that he would have to begin his art education of the people at the higher grades of society. The careful student will see the channel out of which art for the people received its impetus sixty years ago.

*Manchester Worthies and their Foundations*, published in 1855, was his next attempt at a book. It only extends, all told, to eighty-eight pages, and he goes over similar ground to that covered in an article he contributed to the *British Quarterly Review*, early in 1854. Edwards was in love with Humphrey Chetham, a Manchester worthy of the finest strain. The immediate purpose of this little effort was to give Edwards an opportunity of expressing his unbounded admiration for the Chetham Library and its founder. Portions of the chapters had appeared in two magazines, and these he elaborated. The almost monastic character of the library struck a sympathetic chord in the mind of the writer of the little book under discussion. Edwards was among the first of librarians, if not the very first, to appreciate the importance of the Chetham Library.

It will have been already seen how glowingly he refers to it in his evidence before the Parliamentary Committees, as the first public library in this country open without let or hindrance to those who desired to use the books. He points out the defects of the library and how much it had been starved for the benefit of the school known in the trust under the name of Hospital. He urged that the Chetham Library would fulfil a greater purpose if it were brought under the administration of the then amended Public Libraries Act of 1855. Edwards wished to see the library linked to the municipal libraries of Manchester, and he marshals his brief with skill. The feoffees smiled then as they would now over any such scheme to gather them into a large net. The little book forms pleasant reading, and his list of some of the great treasures in the library formed the basis of further inquiry into what the library contained. Between Thomas Jones, the librarian of the Chetham Library, and Edwards there was a warm friendship begun at the time of the Parliamentary inquiry, and continued and strengthened during the life of the latter in Manchester. Thomas Jones stands out prominently among the librarians of the Chetham Library.

His article on "Libraries," in the eighth edition of the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, covers sixty pages, and the thirteenth volume in which it was printed was issued in 1857. The whole of it is very much in the Edwards style. He begins by treating of the collection of books by legal exaction, by donation, and by international exchange. Each section is a little treatise on the point with which he deals with at the moment. His chapter on the "Internal Regulation and Financial Economy of Libraries" is one of the most interesting sections, and illustrates how absorbed his mind was becoming in the question of library economy. The second section of his contribution is upon the history of libraries. Probably no brief history of libraries gives a more succinct account of libraries than does Edwards in this chapter. The final corrections of his proofs of the contribution are in the

hands of the present writer, and are one of many evidences of his thoroughness. These chapters in the reference book in which they appeared formed the basis of the first edition of his *Memoirs of Libraries*.

Edwards' contributions to the eighth edition of the *Encyclopædia Britannica* were varied and numerous. To vol. xiii., the article on "Libraries," on the "History of Libraries" already mentioned; to vol. xvi., article on "Newspapers," extending to 25 pages; vol. xviii., "Police," occupying 26 pages; "Post-Office," 25 pages; vol. xix., "Savings Banks," 18 pages; vol. xxi., "Tea and Tea Trade," 12 pages; "Charles Alexis M. Clerel de Tocqueville," 5 cols.; "Ant. L. Claude Destutt de Tracy," 3 cols.; "Trade Museums and Trade Schools," 8 cols.; "Weaving," 14 pages; "Wool and Wool Trade," "Woollen and Worsted Manufactures," 21 pages. A reference to any one of these articles will show how comprehensive was his range of reading to have enabled him to write upon subjects so diverse as tea, and the wool trade, and written, too, not in the strain of the newspaper writer, but with a singular grip of the whole question. It may be said that his article on weaving gives information, even at this date, not by any means universally known among those who have spent a lifetime in that trade. It is probable that the list of contributions quoted is not exhaustive. Of the nine editions of this great work the eighth is by many looked upon as the best. Many of the articles were treatises on their particular subject. Several of those by Edwards may be so designated.

So many references have been made on the present occasion to his chief book on libraries that it will suffice to epitomise here the contents of the work.

*Memoirs of Libraries: Including a Handbook of Library Economy.* London, 1859. 2 vols. Illustrated, 1041 pp., with sixty-eight pages of introductory matter.

The paging runs through both volumes continuously. Book I. gives an account of the Libraries of the Ancients,

including Egypt, Greece, Rome, etc., with a chapter on their destruction and dispersion. Book II. deals with the Libraries of the Middle Ages, chiefly Monastic, with an account of their economy, and their dispersion at the dissolution of Monasteries. There is also a chapter on Libraries formed by the royal, noble and other families during the Middle Ages. Book III. gives an account of the Modern Libraries of Great Britain and Ireland, including the British Museum, Bodleian Library, the University and other Libraries of Oxford and Cambridge; Chetham's Library, Manchester; the Cathedral Libraries of England; Lambeth Palace and Inns of Court Libraries in London; Municipal Libraries of Norwich, Bristol and Leicester; the Parochial Libraries of England; and the history and working of the Public Libraries Acts, 1850-1855, chiefly in Manchester and Liverpool. This ends the first volume.

The subject of British Libraries is continued in the second volume with descriptions of the Advocates' and Signet Libraries of Edinburgh and the University Libraries of Scotland, Trinity College, Dublin, and other Irish Libraries. Minor Libraries of London, and dispersed and existing British Private Libraries. Book IV. describes the Principal Libraries of the United States, including subscription, proprietary, Congressional, State, school and town, with a chapter on the Smithsonian Institution at Washington. Book V. is devoted to the Modern Libraries of Continental Europe, and leads off with the Imperial Library of France (now the Bibliothèque Nationale), minor Parisian Libraries, and the Provincial Libraries of France. Then follow the Libraries of Italy, Austria and Germany, Poland, Holland, Switzerland, Belgium, Denmark, Sweden, Norway, Hungary, Russia, Spain and Portugal. In the case of every country the principal libraries of every town are fully described.

The second part of the book commences at page 569, and is devoted to the Economy of Libraries. Book I., on Book Collecting, deals with the copy-tax question, gifts, Public Documents, International Exchanges, Purchases.

Book II. deals with Buildings, including plans and views of existing libraries, hints on planning and information on fittings and furniture. Book III., on Classification and Catalogues, is very important, and contains the celebrated historical account and tables of Classification Schemes, issued separately at Manchester in 1855, the question of printed *versus* manuscript catalogues, with remarks on catalogue compilation, etc. Book IV., Internal Administration and Public Service, reviews important questions like librarianship, committees, finance, bookbinding, public access, regulations of reading-rooms and lending libraries, and various other matters. The whole is concluded by a general index.

This is at once the most elaborate, complete and scholarly work on the subject of libraries in general ever written, and it represents an immense amount of labour and research. Though much of the information is now out of date, and many methods described have been superseded or improved, it still remains a veritable quarry from which every succeeding writer on libraries must be content to gather material.

*Chapters of the Biographical History of the French Academy : With an Appendix Relating to the Unpublished Monastic Chronicle, entitled "Liber de Hyda".* 176 pp. 1864.

This is one of the least known of Edwards' books, but is one of the best. On this side of the channel, as he begins his books by pointing out, there are very hazy conceptions, except among the most learned, of all that is inferred in France by being a member of the French Academy. A celebrated French writer had, just before Edwards wrote, described a membership of the French Academy as being the "noblest reward which in our days can crown a glorious and independent life". Possibly it was this saying of Count de Montalembert which led Edwards to look into the history of the Academy. He displays a keen grasp of the literary qualities of some of the past holders of the coveted chairs of the Academy.

Literary and historical fame has often gathered around the Academy, and some of the most noted battles over election or expulsion, between 1629-1683, are surveyed by Edwards with considerable skill. Within a compass of 118 pages he gives a literary panorama, and one free from the terrible prolixity which has spoiled some of his other work. It was not a case of one volume being arranged between himself and publisher, and the work growing into two ponderous volumes. One of the best, if not the best chapter in the book, is chapter x., dealing with the election of De Tocqueville, and that writer's work on North America. Writing of this book Edwards says: "Much of the book has a like home applicability. There are keen censures in it, which consist simply in putting facts under the light, but the facts so lighted up are by no means exclusively of American growth." He finishes that part of his book with reference to the claims of the candidates of 1863. All through he shows his acquaintance with French literature. The interests of literature in France, he says, are the interests of remote readers all over the world. Whether that position will be maintained in the future is doubtful. A detailed account of the *Book of Hyde* looks singularly out of place in this record of the French Academy, but it fills forty-six pages of the book. In 1861-62 he was at work on Lord Macclesfield's Library, and then discovered the Hyde manuscript. It was a fortunate find, and it was natural for Edwards to try and make the most of this discovery in the literary world. The only way to do this was to publish a synopsis of the MS. at the earliest possible date. His record of the French Academy afforded this opportunity, and hence this is the apparent reason why there is in one book of 176 pages two totally dissimilar subjects introduced. The parallel pages of *Asser*, the *Saxon Chronicle* and the *Book of Hyde Abbey*, in Edwards' abstract show in clear form the value of the Macclesfield MS. This treatise called the attention of scholars in a special way to the manuscript, and prepared the way for Edwards

being engaged by the Master of the Rolls to edit the work for the Government series of historical books.

*Libraries and Founders of Libraries.* 507 pp. 1864.

The work is divided into twelve chapters with full appendices. About thirty pages, chiefly in the introductory chapters, are from his article on libraries in the *Encyclopædia Britannica*. These chapters deal with the ancient and mediæval libraries. Chapter v. is concerning the libraries of some famous authors of various periods. Forty pages are devoted to these, and they are among the best in the book. Chapters vi. and vii. treat of libraries of some celebrated monarchs, and the old Royal Library of the Kings of England. The History of the State Paper Office and the Public Records of the Realm give details and information not commonly met with. Chapters x. and the two following are devoted to the Macclesfield Library at Shirburn Castle, the Marlborough Library at Blenheim Palace, and the Spencer Library then at Althorp and now at Manchester. Edwards' reference to Dibdin's work is so good that it is worthy of a place here.

It is impossible to write about the Spencer Library—and scarcely possible to visit it—without incurring obligation to Dr. Dibdin. His well-known books have had the curious fortune to keep their price, without keeping their reputation. They are lustily abused, and eagerly bought. Nor is the cause far to seek. Want of method, fantastic raptures about trifles, indiscriminate emphasis, inattention to minute accuracy, petty but provoking affectations in style, and wearisome repetitions of pointless anecdotes, are drawbacks which need very eminent merits to countervail them. That Dibdin had eminent merits is certain. But his works bring high prices chiefly because they are very decorative, and of small impressions. The author's acquaintance with books was large, and his love for them real. As a writer, he had powers which under due restraint might have become considerable. He had a highly cultivated taste in the arts of design. He had much industry. He had seen a good deal of the world, under varied aspects. But his mind seems always to have lacked the power of graduation. Much as he had mixed with society, his writings evince plainly that he could as little mark degrees in his estimates of men, as he could mark them in his estimates of books. The petty, the conventional, and the merely external qualities of both, so engrossed his attention, that the vital and intrinsic qualities usually escaped him.

When he had to catalogue a library, magnificent in condition and binding, abounding in rarities, and affording ample means for artistic illustration, he did his work to the delight of the book-loving reader as well as to his own. When he attempted to guide other men, not in collecting fine books, but in choosing instructive and elevating ones, he showed plainly that he had been so busy about type and colophon, uncropped margins and morocco bindings, copies with proof plates and copies on vellum, as to allow the spirit of the author and the essence of the book to evaporate under his manipulations. In like manner, when you read his *Reminiscences* of the men with whom he had mixed in life, you are left in considerable doubt whether or not he quite understood the difference between two men, both of whom were "Roxburghians," and editors of black-letter rarities—Walter Scott and Joseph Haslewood.

But, be that as it may, Dibdin's services to the Spencer Library are eminent and enduring. He loved the master, and he loved the task. He has sometimes described books inaccurately. He has more frequently described them with tiresome and frivolous garrulity. But, in the main, his work was honestly and zealously done. With a little more method, and a good deal more of plainness, conciseness, and proportion, his Catalogues would have been perfect models. As it is, the *Bibliotheca Spenceriana*, the *Aedes Althorpiana*, and the *Descriptive Catalogue of the Cassano-Serra Library*, constitute a more valuable contribution to bibliographical knowledge, in the technical sense of that term, than has been made by the aggregate labours of any three among other English bibliographers who could be named. Those works have made Lord Spencer's fame as a collector, and the merits of his library, matters of ordinary knowledge to all lovers of books throughout Europe, America, and Australia. They have made the paths smoother for all future labourers in the rugged bibliographic field. They have both gratified and spread a wise taste for fine printing. And the faults which attach to them are precisely such as are wont to be most keenly censured by people who, in like circumstances, would have been incapable of doing so well. In other ways, too, Dibdin rendered good service in his day.

The list of known Catalogues of English Monastic Libraries and the Synoptical View of the Public Records are fine pieces of work. When it is possible to gather up in one volume the best from Edwards' books on libraries, the *Libraries and Founders of Libraries* will have a prominent place.

*Synoptical Tables of the Records of the Realm* (13 x 8 inches, 44 pp.), 1865. His opening words are, "The long-continued researches of the most accomplished and

laborious of our legal Antiquaries have failed to establish the dates when the varied functions of the *primitive Curia Regis*, or, it may more distinctively be called, the *Aula Regia*, were, for administrative purposes, first subdivided into those four or five branches, out of which grew, in process of time, the five principal Courts of the Realm". He then traces the several Record Departments of State, and shows how the preservation of historical documents ultimately became an important office of State, with a Master of the Rolls as chief. His *Synoptical Tables* were historically useful at the time they were published. Truly this man was a breaker-up of unworked ground.

*Liber Monasterii de Hyda: Comprising a Chronicle of the Affairs of England, from the Settlement of the Saxons to the Reign of King Cnut: and a Chartulary of the Abbey of Hyde, in Hampshire. A.D. 455-1023.* Edited by Edward Edwards, and published under the direction of the Master of the Rolls, 1866.

As a piece of historical work, indicative of Edwards' ability in this direction, the *Liber Monasterii de Hyda* ranks high by virtue of its own and its editor's merits. He was at work cataloguing the library of the Earl of Macclesfield at Shirburn Castle, Oxfordshire, when he discovered this Macclesfield MS., a large volume on vellum. Some of the pages have richly illuminated borders. How it came into the family of the nobleman named is not known, but it must have been a day of great elation to Edwards when the book came into his hands. This book of the Hyde monastery at Winchester is a valuable addition to our knowledge of the Saxon period.

The book covers some 582 pages. The introduction extends to ninety-eight pages, and the appendix to the introduction to sixteen pages. Then follows the book, the first part of which is written in Latin and the latter part in Saxon. Throughout there are full and carefully made references by Edwards, and marginal

notes. The work would not have been entrusted to Edwards by the Master of the Rolls without the qualifications of the editor being fully known. The book proves the scholarship of Edwards. His knowledge of Latin and Anglo-Saxon must have been considerable. The introduction is a most interesting piece of reading, and it may be doubted whether Edwards ever produced a better piece of literature. In some of his books, and particularly in the second edition of the *Memoirs of Libraries*, the monastic habit of introducing long parentheses had taken possession of him. His sentences in these are long, and often involved, and require a second reading to make clear. In the introduction to the *Book of Hyde* this peculiarity is absent. The style is clear and crisp. As a general example of this concise style, the following sentence may be quoted. It is from the "Introduction," p. 33, and refers to the abbots of New Minster:—

It (Hyde Abbey) was now (A.D. 903-968) scarcely remembered as the once venerated sleeping-place of a mighty king, (Alfred) who was some day to burst his bonds and restore the ancient monarchy of Britain. But by the contemporaries of Ethelgar's youth, Glastonbury was still fondly venerated as the sacred fane which Joseph of Arimathea had founded; and by the contemporaries of his manhood as the pattern monastery of England, snatched by Dunstan from secular and criminal hands, and moulded into a true exemplar of Benedictine holiness. At Glastonbury—at first, as it seems, under Dunstan's own eye, and always under the immediate inspiration which he had breathed into its schools and offices—Ethelgar learnt to be an austere, laborious, and ambitious, but also a benevolent and a charitable monk. The training which Dunstan had begun at Glastonbury, Ethelwold completed at Abingdon. Ethelwold had ruled the see of Winchester but a short time, when he began his vigorous reform at New Minster. When the time and the preliminary measures seemed to him ripe for completion, he put the Abingdon men into the stalls of the refractory canons, and left to the new abbot, Ethelgar, the practical working out of the Benedictine system. Ethelwold's zeal had clothed itself in an amplitude of Christian firmness, but the Christian meekness had been much to seek. Ethelgar was gentle as well as resolute. The soft hand was now to be felt as well as the steel glove. The woes of the expelled

clergy and their families could touch him, though they had failed to touch the bishop. In the resolve that performance should follow profession, and that monastic revenue should entail monastic duty, both were at one.

Edwards all through his introduction caught well the spirit of the times covered by the *Book of Hyde*. He revelled in this dive into old English history. Hyde Abbey was practically founded by Alfred, although his long-cherished desire to found a new monastery which should pre-eminently be a place of education, was frustrated by the death of that ruler. The reader does not require to be told that the *Saxon Chronicles* are scanty with regard to this period. Edwards links up all that is recorded in the *Book of Hyde*, and passes the whole through a discriminating intellect. It is to be regretted that this long chapter of introduction was not reprinted as it stands, during the year of the Alfred millenary. It would have formed a useful contribution to the literature of the Alfred age, and the kingships which followed, and especially of the vast part which the monasteries filled, in the economy of learning and religious influence. "Next after its pre-eminent function as a place of perpetual prayer and praise, Alfred desired above all things that this New Monastery should be a seat of learning," says Edwards, and Hyde Abbey through various vicissitudes performed these functions. Of the desecration of Alfred's tomb in 1788, and numerous other details which are introduced, this is not the place to refer. Everything is touched with the sympathetic hand of a painstaking historical student. Monkish annalists are not strong in dates, and the *Book of Hyde* is a striking example of this, as Edwards repeatedly points out in his introduction and notes. The more Edwards' literary work is taken in its concrete form, the more satisfactory does it seem. This is the most scholarly of all his writings.

*Exmouth and its Neighbourhood, Ancient and Modern ; Being Notices Historical, Biographical, and Descriptive,*

*of a Corner of South Devon.* Published anonymously in 1868. 362 pp.

Exactly what caused this book to be written is not clear. A relative of his wife's had some connection with the Rolle's estate in Devon. Merely a pot-boiler the book certainly was not, and the research which it involved was the immediate cause of his desire to undertake a more ambitious *Life of Raleigh*. A good part of the book is taken up with Raleigh. The title he gave to the book is not a happy one. It is too suggestive of the conventional guide-book, and a guide-book in this sense Edwards certainly did not mean it to be. It gives a charming sketch of Raleigh, and for interest and delightful reading it is doubtful whether Edwards has produced anything better. Chapters v., vi. and vii. are the best in the book. The parts descriptive of the scenery of that part of Devon are written with a skill which grows upon the reader as he proceeds. It is a history of the southern part of that county which will ever be attractive to lovers of British scenery, and especially for Raleigh's association with it. Raleigh was a great Englishman reared in a county which has turned out some of England's best men. Edwards quickly caught the Devonian spirit. He visited most of the parts made famous by Raleigh's connection with them, and gave to this little book, issued without any name, some of his best work. The touch was a light one throughout, but this adds to its charm.

His pamphlet, published in 1868, on "Diocesan Registries and Historical Searchers," is very characteristic of the man. It was a correspondence between himself, the Bishop of Salisbury and the Bishop's Registrar and the Registrar of the Chapter. He was then making searches for his Raleigh book and had been to Salisbury. Some difficulties had presented themselves as to his making searches, and a claim of a guinea was made upon him for official services. This charge he resisted on principle, and defended it in the local county court. He printed the

whole correspondence with his comments. He lost the case and had to pay, but there is little doubt about Edwards having been rather badly served. The trouble may possibly have been of his own causing, but he furthered the reasonable demand on the part of historical writers, that they should be unharassed in their access to the Diocesan Records. In his pamphlet he said that he had journeyed more than two thousand four hundred miles in search of Ralegh documents.

*The Life of Sir Walter Ralegh.* 2 vols. 1868. Pp. 723-530, rendered service to the student of English history. The second volume gives his letters, collected for the first time by Edwards. The Regius Professor of Modern History at Oxford, at the time the book was published, described it as a "monument of patient and persevering research, marked by a sound historical discrimination". The first volume of *Ralegh* is a solid piece of work. It will never rank as a great history, as his methods of treatment would alone prevent this, but every page of it proves the care with which he handled his material, and the patient skill with which he developed his record. His picture of one of the giants of the Elizabethan age is a powerful one. He leads up to the cruel ending of all Ralegh's greatness by a series of pictures which are graphic and, at times, impressive. There are portions, which, if the reader did not know who was the writer of the book, he might think that he was reading some work of the author of the *Conquest of England*. That period of English history will ever have a charm for most readers. It was a great age because the men and the women in it were great by every test which can be applied to them, taking into account the period and the circumstances under which they lived. Some of them were roaming buccaneers of the high seas, but in this respect they were no better and no worse than the fortune-seekers of other leading nations, and the standard of international honour was then not as great as is now the case. Ralegh's share, in these gold and colony-seeking expeditions, is drawn

with care and precision. Edwards was saturated with his subject, and had a great admiration for Ralegh. He lived wholly in the Ralegh spirit during the time he was at work on the book, as is evidenced from his diaries. Read where one may in the work it is interesting, and any student of the period would turn naturally to Edwards' book for reference. The second volume is almost wholly occupied with the letters. Edwards was probably the first to use, in a collective form, the rich collection of manuscript letters at Hatfield House. Lord Salisbury gave every assistance for this to be done, and Edwards gratefully inscribes the second volume to that statesman. The late Lady Salisbury, it is gathered from entries in Edwards' diaries, rendered aid in making copies of some of the letters for the author of the book. The index to the letters is a capital piece of work. If all historians would give in so full a form an index to the letters quoted as Edwards has done, it would be a gain to the student. Librarians will perhaps turn to the list of contents of the second volume to see what is meant. If the work in its entirety is not a distinguished history, it deserves to rank highly as a careful piece of historical writing.

*Free Town Libraries: Their Formation, Management, and History; in Britain, France, Germany, and America. Together with Brief Notices of Book Collectors, and of the Respective Places of Deposit of their Surviving Collections.* London, 1869. xvi + 372 and (262) pp.

Book I. deals with early Free Libraries in Great Britain and the Legislation passed up to 1866; the duties of Local Authorities; the planning, formation and organisation of the Free Libraries; and the actual practice in towns like Manchester, Salford, Liverpool, Birkenhead, Birmingham, Oxford, Cambridge, Southampton, etc. Book II. describes the Town, Communal and Popular Libraries of France, Germany, Switzerland, Italy, Belgium; their constitution, management and limitations. Book III. gives similar historical and practical information about the State, Town,

Endowed and other Public Libraries in the United States and Canada. A whole chapter is devoted to the work of the Boston Public Library. Book IV. is devoted to notices of celebrated Book Collectors, occupying 224 pages, with a separate pagination. Under the name of each collector is given the libraries or other places where the collection is deposited, with notes on the libraries and nature of the collections, arranged alphabetically under the name of the Collectors.

*Lives of the Founders of the British Museum: with Notices of its Chief Augmenters and other Benefactors, 1570-1870.* London, 1870. Trübner & Co. Illustrated. xii + 780 pp.

Lives and historical and critical notices of Sir Robert Cotton, founder of the Cottonian Library; Henry Prince of Wales, founder of the "Royal Library" at St. James's; Thomas Howard, Earl of Arundel, collector of the Arundel MSS.; Robert Harley, Earl of Oxford, collector of the Harleian MSS.; Sir Hans Sloane, and other founders and collectors whose collections formed the nucleus of the present British Museum. Book II. deals with other organisers and augmenters, and gives an account of Montagu House and such collectors of archæological specimens as Sir William Hamilton and the Earl of Elgin, whose "Elgin Marbles" form an important item of the Greek sculpture galleries. Notices of Cracherode, the Marquess of Lansdowne, Dr. Charles Burney, Francis Hargrave and the ninth Earl of Bridgewater are also included. Book II. concludes with an account of the "King's Library" formed by George III. and the collections of Sir Joseph Banks. The concluding Book (No. III.) deals with the internal arrangements and economy of the Museum under the management of librarians like Joseph Planta, Sir Henry Ellis, and Sir Antonio Panizzi, including an account of the evolution and adoption of the plans for the great circular reading-room and other parts of the present building. A chapter is devoted to the work of archæological collectors like Fellows, Layard and Newton, and another

to the founder of the Grenville Library, Thomas Grenville. The conclusion of the book consists of chapters on miscellaneous bequests and collections of antiquities, books, ethnography, etc., and the proposals made for separating the Art and Natural History Collections from the Books and Antiquities, since carried out by the formation of the new museum buildings at South Kensington.

Dr. Garnett, in his appreciative sketch of Edwards in the *Dictionary of National Biography*, says of this book: "By his *Lives of the Founders of the British Museum* he made himself the historian of the national library, and although his work must be supplemented and may possibly be superseded by others, it is likely to remain the groundwork of every future history".

It will be seen from the chronological table in the appendix what is embodied in the Carte manuscripts. The labour appertaining to them represented a solidly large task. Edwards worked for six years in the Bodleian Library, and the results of his labours are contained in thirty-five large foolscap folio volumes. He brought to bear upon the work considerable familiarity with historical studies and with old records. In this, as in all his work, he desired to be thorough. The dates, however, in it have not always been correctly given, as has been pointed out by Gardiner and others. It was due to the kindly feeling of the late Rev. H. O. Coxe, M.A., librarian at the time, that the work was placed in his hands. Edwards was never on the regular staff of the Bodleian in the acknowledged sense of the term. He was merely engaged for a specific piece of work, and his calendar slips were paid for, according to number, so that his position was one entirely of a temporary nature. When this work was finished they were obliged to say that they could not afford to keep him for anything else. All librarians will at once see that a period of six years occupied in the cataloguing of manuscripts, no matter how voluminous, was a question for the grave consideration of those responsible for the administration of that library. In the case

of the *Carte MSS.* a gross sum of £1,320 had been expended. Edwards wished to do supplementary work in connexion with his calendar, and had the library authorities at the time been better off, they might have let him do so. But there was a financial deficit in 1882, the year after the death of the Rev. H. O. Coxe, and a new librarian had been appointed. The successor to Mr. Coxe, who remains the chief librarian at the present time, had no other alternative than to bring the calendaring of these papers to a conclusion. Edwards writes on page 13 in the preface of the first volume of the second edition of *Memoirs of Libraries* as if he had been arbitrarily dismissed from a post which was his by right of a tenure extending over a term of years. This was not the case, and it is only just to Mr. E. W. B. Nicholson, M.A., Bodley's librarian, that the exact facts should be known. That Edwards laboured at his task strenuously is readily granted, but the results were such as to cause the calendar to remain in manuscript, in which form, however, it is still available for reference in the reading-room. The revision of it would involve so much further labour in reducing it to a correct state for printing, that high authorities have reported against this being undertaken. A much more succinct calendar would have sufficed. That Edwards felt acutely the snapping of the Oxford link, in his life, is patent from his diaries and correspondence at the time. The loss of the income which he had derived from Bodley's was a serious blow to him, and placed him, so far as ways and means were concerned, in an awkward position. The outlook was dark for the old man, and no wonder that stubborn depression should have taken possession of his soul. He loved Oxford. Its colleges, its libraries, and its river and fields soothed him, and curbed the turbulence of his restless temper. But the end of his sojourn by the Isis was to come, and the manner of its coming left behind a wounded spirit and a sense of having been wronged. But that he suffered from the inevitable has been made clear.

During all his Oxford days the Rev. Charles Plummer, M.A., of Corpus Christi College, was his friend. Some work in the library of that college was given Edwards to do at the time that he was engaged at the Bodleian. To Mr. Plummer, more than to any one, is due the pension of £80 a year granted to Edwards on 23rd August, 1883, in recognition of his valuable services to the cause of literature. There is a pardonable irony in the publication of the list printed by Edwards in the second edition of *Memoirs of Libraries* of the pensions granted by the Crown during that official year. Edwards' amount is the least. One gentleman, because he was the son of his father who was a poet, had a larger sum, and one gentleman who had rendered service to English philology received nearly double the amount granted to Edwards. There are other anomalies in the list. But whoever yet saw a pension list in which there were not anomalies? In 1876 there was a memorial for a pension for Edwards addressed to Lord Beaconsfield, supported by the Mayor of Manchester, and the Chairman of the Public Libraries Committee in that city, and also by the Provost and Scholars of Queen's College, Oxford. There was no hope of success, and the matter dropped. It was not a light task to induce Edwards to give his consent for another attempt to be made. With the efforts in 1876 he had nothing whatever to do. No man ever tried less than did Edwards to fix his maintenance on the public purse. He was no parasite of the Treasury. The Rev. Charles Plummer in 1882 saw a possibility of reaching the ear of Mr. Gladstone, through one of the Premier's sons who owned Corpus Christi as his *Alma Mater*. A petition was prepared, and when supported by men like Sir Edward A. Bond, and aided by powerful public bodies, it brought about the desired end. This was not the only kindness conferred upon Edwards by Mr. Plummer. He admired the old man for the services he had rendered to literature, and in the spread of useful knowledge. The pension was honestly and laboriously earned, and this cannot be said of all the claims upon

the Civil List which are granted. Edwards inscribes the second edition of his *Memoirs of Libraries* to Mr. Plummer "with feelings of true regard and esteem". Could he have had the entire pension for his own purposes, it would have sufficed to make him comfortable, but the requirements of his sister, and the extent of his postage and printing account, on behalf of the second edition of *Memoirs of Libraries*, made serious inroads on the modest income.

Edwards' "Letters of a Hampshire Conservative (loyal to the Church and to the Queen)," contributed in 1884 to Isle of Wight newspapers, covered a number of columns in those papers. There is much sound sense in several of them, and those on Public Schools, Public Libraries, Public Parks and Charities, under the control of the City Corporation, are the best of the series. But they are often spoiled by narrowness and incomplete vision.

*Handbook to the Literature of General Biography.* Part I. 1885. 250 copies printed.

Edwards collaborated with the Rev. Charles Hole, B.A., in the preparation of this fragment. To it he contributed the chapters on "Biography: its Aims and its Varieties". This is divided into chapters, and runs to nearly fifty pages. The biographical part proper comprises thirty-two pages, and Edwards' initial appears to most of the annotations. The work was to have been completed in eight parts, but it could not be carried out. For a long number of years Edwards had a plan for a work on the lines of this handbook, and offered it to several publishers, but without success. He had much of the true biographical spirit with a trustworthy critical view. One of the last letters written by Edwards, which are still in existence, is one addressed to the Rev. Charles Hole, B.A., dated 7th December, 1885, about this handbook. It is written from The Manse, Niton.

I thank you very gratefully for the kindness of your letter of the 25th ulto., and beg you to present also my best thanks to Mrs. Hole, for her kind remembrance of me after so many years. You happily

enjoy domestic blessings of which I have been deprived for nine years, having lost my dear wife at the close of 1876—after a union of almost thirty-three years. I have felt my bereavement very deeply. When I left Oxford (in 1883) my health was quite broken down, but the change to this milder climate has, by God's blessing, been very beneficial to me, and though far from being well, I have much reason to be grateful for the measure of strength still granted to me at a very advanced age. As to our little *Handbook* only this first part has been worked off—in an impression of 250 copies—and I can scarcely hope to be enabled to continue it, without your effective co-operation. But I had no thought of your incurring any part of the risk of publication. The literary plan of the work is so much your own, that it would be utterly unwarrantable to put my name to it without yours, and of my share of the labour you speak much too generously. . . .

The following are extracts from a letter dated 3rd January, 1902, from the Rev. Charles Hole, B.A., to the present writer:—

. . . This correspondence with you has awakened very welcome memories of the distant past, otherwise almost faded by lapse of time. I have a very distinct and vivid recollection of Mr. and Mrs. Edwards. They came to Shanklin while I was curate there, and I quickly made their acquaintance, drawn towards Mr. Edwards by his literary taste and conversation. They were visitors at that pretty spot I think for a whole season [this would be in 1862]—if not for two seasons. Their sitting-room loaded with books and papers in every corner. His figure and face are quite before my mind's eye; of fair height and well formed; a very kindly expression of countenance, conversation ever interesting and welcome. I gathered that he had held some post at the British Museum, but I never knew exactly what. . . . According to my recollection Mr. Edwards, after I parted from him, received an appointment to catalogue a nobleman's library. I do not remember ever having seen a photograph or a portrait of him. . . . Mr. Edwards used to attend the Rev. Mr. Southouse's Church, the little country Church on the Ventnor Road, and appreciated his ministry, which I think suited Mr. Edwards' cast of mind very much, plain and simple yet full of life and stimulus. . . . A serious religious tone, not over demonstrative, is what I recollect in Mr. Edwards. You will have gathered, from all I have said, how welcome his memory is still to me, and how much I valued, as I still do value, men of his stamp. . . .

#### The Second Edition of *Memoirs of Libraries*.

Whatever estimate he may have formed regarding his other work, the *Memoirs of Libraries* was his favourite

book. There was to the end an apparent consciousness that he would be remembered by this book. The first edition represents a mountain of labour, but for the second edition he had, from the beginning, planned a long series of radical changes in its general scheme and scope. The book was the child of his middle life, when he was in his forty-seventh year, and the second edition was to be the outcome of his mature years, when a stage in the ladder of life had been reached, after which it would be scarcely possible to undertake any large task. There will be few writers, or lovers of books, librarians or general readers, who cannot enter to some extent with sympathy into the old man's intense longing to leave behind him this work in as complete a state as his fulness of years, and fresh library gleanings from every source, would have enabled him to do. "This do, and let me then die," he may be imagined as saying to himself. The mediæval monk, labouring in the dim light of the waning day at his work of illumination, could not have been more eager to finish his task before the light departed, than was Edwards to complete his last work before the lamp of life was extinguished. The whole aspect of this brave struggle against poverty, old age and ill health, as it can now be viewed, is pathetic in the extreme.

In his diary for 8th June, 1859, one leaf only of which has been found, there occurs this entry:—

Letter from . . . as to proposed arragt. abt. *Mems. of Libs.* suggested by my letter of 16th ulto. They decline my present offer respecting 2nd Edit. but express a willingness "to treat with you for your share of the remaining stock, or rather to pay you a sum of money as a compensation for any claim you may have on this edition": stipulating, however, in any arrangement that we may now make for the option of publishg. a new edition "should it be considered expedient to have one, either upon the terms of the present Edn., or such other terms as we may mutually agree upon".

This was very early in the day for thoughts with regard to a new edition, seeing that the first one was only issued in January of the same year. The mental juvenility of

the author aided him to outstrip the publisher in the demand for the book. It may be stated, that so far as can be judged from the correspondence now available, he seems to have been treated with forbearance and consideration by his several publishers. Disputes and differences between author and publisher are as old as the hills. Where one book is successful there are twenty which are not successful. But every author has an overwhelming conviction that his book is that successful one in the whole twenty, or at least that it ought to be, and he probably lays the blame on the publisher if it does not meet with the sale which, he estimates, should follow a proper distribution of announcements of the work. The majority of libraries ought to have upon their shelves every book dealing with libraries and library administration. But while a good number take this view, a very great many do not, and those who take the negative view are in the majority, and both the author and publisher of books such as Edwards' must suffer in consequence. Between 1859 and 1877 Edwards never lost hold of the need and the possibility for a second edition. He was overburdened with the thought that he owed to the public the issue of this second edition. Some doubt had been thrown on the lack of accuracy in various groups of statistics, and he was sensitive that this cast a reflection upon his claim for careful research and discrimination in putting forward his figures. Edwards had a naturally feverish desire to improve a good book, the best ever written upon libraries, by careful revision, and this was his ruling feeling. Among his papers is a rough draft of a letter dated 1877, in which the following passages occur:—

It will not, I daresay, much surprise you to be told that (in spite of all past discouragements on your part), very few years of the eighteen that have elapsed since *Memoirs of Librs.* was first published, have gone by without bringing some considerable progress in my preparation for a new edition, and I now venture to trouble you with one letter more on that subject. You know well that there is no vanity in

my saying that, with all the many and grievous defects, these vols. were, and remain, the book on this special subject. But years are rapidly passing by, and it would be a matter of most painful regret to me to leave the book at my departure with all its blemish. . . . I have now given solely to it the hard work of seven consecutive months—equal perhaps to nine or ten months of ordinary working hours—and I have made it substantially a new book. I now ask of you, on the old acquaintance and correspondence of 27 yrs., a patient and not a hurried consdn. of, and answer to, my present proposal. More than 1000 pp. (a thousand) are now prep'd. for the printer, and of these almost the half is substantially new. . . . I venture to hope you have, still—in spite of all our petty differences and . . . misunderstandings, . . . a measure of good feeling and goodwill towards me as a patient toiler in a somewhat rugged field, and as one whom you well know not to have aimed at merely personal and selfish ends. Had I thought only, or mainly of these, I shd. have been a richer man, in the manner of living, and a much poorer one in the end. . . . You will hardly need to be told that to give my whole time . . . has enforced upon me many sacrifices, many personal privations. But the years are passing rapidly. And though I am still able (D.V.) to work at need for eight or even for nine hours at a stretch—without any break—I have yet had my admon'tns. how timely it is becoming that I should think of gathering up my poor sheaves. . . . I regret my hasty brusquerie with you in '70, and I regret it the more because I now think I may very possibly have misunderstood your motives in taking the course which at that time so much pained me. It may perhaps not be an obtrusion . . . to add that of late I have had much worry and much affliction. And they lead me to think somewhat differently on many matters than I have thought heretofore.

The publishers of the first edition offered the unsold copies on special terms, and Edwards hoped that if the very worst came he would be able to buy up the remaining stock of the first edition, and so clear the path for the new issue. Where the money was to come for this was not clear, but did an author ever yet take into his consideration such a frivolous detail? The heart of the publishers' case lies in their offer to sell the balance of copies. And the heart of Edwards' position was that a way would be found for him to do so by some means or other. In his first prospectus, dated Oxford, 7th August, 1882, he states that "a small number of copies (first edition) remains still in print, and for the purchase of these the author is

in treaty with the publishers ; with the intention of selling that 'remainder' in the Colonies. . . ." The subscription to the new edition was to be paid only upon the actual delivery of each volume, and the first volume he hoped would be ready for issue in June, 1883. In April, 1883, Edwards offered a well-known firm of publishers the MS. free of all charge or honorarium whatever for authorship. This was declined on the ground of the existing copies of the first edition. He offered it to an Oxford firm on the same terms, with a promised contribution of £25 towards the cost of the engravings. This was also declined upon the same grounds. He tried more than one London printer, but was unsuccessful in meeting with any one who would take the risk of publishing the book, especially in face of a public announcement of the publishers of the first edition, that copies still remained on sale. At this stage it will be opportune to introduce a few extracts from correspondence about this new edition. The Library Association met in London in 1877. Mr. E. W. B. Nicholson, M.A., took an active part in the arrangements for that meeting. To him Edwards wrote on 24th September, 1877 :—

I have thought it to be the least obtrusive way of replying to that obliging card of invitation for Oct. 4, from the Lord Mayor—for which I am indebted to your own kindly remembrance of my name—to ask of you the additional favour of placing before his Lordship, at a befitting time, and in company with such other notes as the occasion may bring, the note which accompanies this letter. It is so much my conviction that you must have found, long ere this, your heap of correspondence, about the Conference, of dimensions somewhat trying, that I forbore to trouble you with any letter of thanks on receiving your kindly proffer, almost a fortnight ago, of the communication from time to time of such printed matter on this subject as may accrue. That will, indeed, be to me a special and most welcome kindness, of which, should life and health be spared to me, I may hope some day to shew, though not to acquit, my sense of indebtedness. The one hope in merely business matters, which amidst many difficulties and obstructions I still nourish, although the years are so rapidly passing on, is that I may yet be enabled to republish *Memoirs of Libraries*, freed and purged from *some* of the many blemishes, acerbities, and ignorances which have long made me ashamed of the book in its present form, as well as supplied with some share of useful and needful additions

and other improvements. As yet, I have failed to make satisfactory arrangements as to republication, but I suppose the time I have already devoted to preparatory labours towards that end would, in the aggregate, amount to more than two years of tolerably sedulous endeavour.

My excuse for troubling you with this mention of a circumstance so personal, is that it will serve to shew, better than other words could do, how much your kindly proffered communication as to the Conference transactions will—if, as I have said, life be spared to me—prove of real use and value to, etc.

On 1st March, 1882, the late John Plant of Salford Museum and Library wrote: “It is so many years ago since we saw each other, and the changes in men and things have been so incessant as well as radical, that I may be understood in the right sense when I say that I had fallen into the habit of thinking of you as one whom I had once known, but who was no longer in the flesh. It is a pleasure to hear from you again, all the greater because it is a surprise, and to learn also that you are in harness working for the love of work, and I hope deriving all the pleasure which good work often brings the worker. . . .”

On 9th August, 1880, Alderman Henry William Newton, the Chairman of the Newcastle-on-Tyne Public Libraries Committee, wrote to ask Edward Edwards to be present at the inaugural ceremony in connection with the opening of the Public Libraries in that town, since promoted to be a city. He was also asked to deliver an address. In January, 1882, Edwards sent thirty volumes as a present for the library, and in a letter sent at the time to the librarian, he said: “I am myself a novel reader, and shall hope, if life and health be vouchsafed to me, to send by-and-by a few books of that sort. . . .” In October there was a further acknowledgment for some eighteen volumes.

Edwards wrote from Niton on Easter Monday, 1884, to Dr. Richard Garnett:—

My truly grateful thanks wait upon you for the welcome gift of the number of *Library Chronicle*, containing your excellent article on good John Dury, who is a very old acquaintance of mine. Our intimacy began in B. M., in years long bygone, and was revived in late years at “Bodley,” during my long labour on the “Carte Papers”.

I respect the man himself, though each passing year makes me less and less an admirer of his political associates. . . . Good John Keble was far from being a man of very widespread historical "research," but he was a very keen reader of the human heart—as, I venture to think, all truly great "Poets" must needs be—and his view of Charles I.—and of his "times,"—however incongruous with the "modern spirit," and however much it may be sneered at for the passing moment,—seems to me to give one proof, the more, that the recluse poet often has a far truer insight into the inner life of past times, than the accomplished and busy "researcher" into historical archives. There seems to be a great temptation, now-a-days, in the eagerness of new "discoveries" to throw into the background old, but most weighty testimony, because of its familiarity. Dury was better, in many respects, than a goodly number of the men with whom he lived, and with whom he worked. . . . The "Prosps." which waits upon you by book post is incomplete. It comes provisionally—to be followed by a better copy by-and-by.

On 5th April, 1884, he wrote from Sea View Cottage, Niton, to Dr. Garnett:—

There being a prospect of my residing, for a few days only (D.V.), very near to town in May—life and health being granted to me—it is my wish then to profit by an intimation Mr. Bond was kind enough to make (in a letter of last autumn), that there were some documents and minutes, relating to the early history of B. M., which he would be able to communicate. Knowing that his leisure for reading, and still more for writing letters—which are at all avoidable—to be extremely restricted, I refrain from troubling him to write in order to make an appointment for so favouring me—at some time entirely suitable to himself. It has occurred to me that your kindness and goodwill to my forthcoming book may induce you to mention the subject at some leisure moment, and to convey an intimation to me. And, indeed, there is another reason why I should seek an intermediacy in the matter. It is likely that there is now a black mark against my humble name, in Mr. Bond's memory, on account of a hasty and regrettable expression of mine on my receipt of the reply of the trustees to my last "Memorial" on the subject of my book. I regret the unwise and petulant words I used. Disappointment at the refusal of a loan, even of the recent Catalogues, and at the reference for consultation of them to the "Town Liby. of Portsmouth," was a little sharpened by his letter having gone the round of the island (literally) (it bearing the address "Nilton" in lieu of "Niton"), and coming to me after, as it seemed, having been opened. Had I been wise enough to delay my acknowledgment of that letter till next day, my irritability would have evaporated. Forgive this obtrusion of my small concerns.

This cottage is almost on the spot where my old cottage of 1838-1839 stood, and where I wrote *Economy of the Fine Arts in England* (printed in 1840).

P.S.—I am as you probably know extremely poor, and I am 5½ miles (I say it gratefully, not complainingly) from the nearest railway. To go to and return from Portsmouth costs me about twelve to fourteen shillings. A journey to Southampton last summer (on acct. of *Memoirs*) did actually cost me £1 16s. as I went by road (thirty-four miles), and by a wherry—having accidentally missed the steamer—(twenty-four miles). I got, in addition, a drenching from the rough sea; and, as you will imagine, have not repeated the experiment. The loan of some of the most recent pubns. of the Museum would have rendered me yeoman service, in completing that section of my forthcoming volume, and would have cost the trustees nothing but the carriage. There wd. have been no risk, as I have already a policy of insurance . . . amply covering all possible loss on that score.

Mr. Charles W. Sutton, M.A., chief librarian, Manchester, wrote on 9th February, 1882: “. . . I am very glad to hear that you are engaged on a new edition of your valuable *Memoirs of Libraries*. I often turn to the old edition, and to your *Free Town Libraries*, but never without renewed and increased respect for your enlightened and indefatigable labours for the spread of education and the encouragement of learning.” On 4th December, 1884, Edwards wrote to Mr. Sutton as follows:—

Can you help me, at a pinch, with one or two more subscriptions by adding a word from yourself to a prospectus or two. . . . The case stands thus: The book is at press—at last, but I am bound to the printer for a “minimum” of 140 subs. (he wants 150 at least) having yet somewhat less than “130”. I am very poor, and the responsibility tells upon me severely, having, in my poverty, expended more than £50 on . . . prospectuses, circulation of them, stationery, etc. . . . I also expended more than £100 on books.

On the following day Mr. Sutton wrote that it was gratifying to hear from “the man whom I, in common with other librarians, look up to as the real founder of Free Libraries”. On 9th December, 1884, Mr. Edwards wrote:—

My most cordial thanks wait upon you for the kindness of your personal subscription, and for your kind promise to help my canvass. The book is now at press. . . . The French part of vol. iii was re-written

thoroughly, from new information, as far back as in 1876-77, and needed only the supplementary matter down to 1884. I venture to anticipate some success, *specially for that* narrative: seeing that the plainest acct. of the strange fortunes and vicissitudes of the "Natl. Liby." in particular, is almost a romance in prose—with some strange "biographies" interwoven. On the strength of your kindness, I venture to trouble you with a few more "Prospectuses". I have also to thank you very sincerely for the interesting paper—lucid and impressive—enclosed with your letter. I had not had previously the pleasure of reading it.

On 20th July, 1885, the following letter was sent to Mr. Sutton. (5.30 A.M. appears under the date.)

The preliminary (*merely* prelimy.—*viz.* Purchase of Books:—Transcriptn. of documents at B. M. and at Bodley;—Printing of "Prosps." and Advertisements;—Postage;—Raily. Parcels;—and Stationery of all kinds) of *Memrs. of Libs.* had cost me, already, upwards of £150 (One hundred and fifty pounds) before the printing of the book (which printing began on 10th Dec., 1884) had reached 16 pages. The result is that I am, almost literally, pauperized, and am in serious difficulty with my landlord here (where I am, and always have been, "only a Lodger" tho' now, happily, an enfranchised one, at least in title). My present difficulties are so serious that I venture—though reluctantly—to ask of you the great favour and kindness of payment, beforehand, of your personal subscription, as far as concerning the first volume only—which I am now able to *promise* shall reach your hands "D.V." in the course of October. Both "General Introduction," and "Text," are at present in the Press, and even the "Preface" is in type, but I am very anxious to bring up the subject-matter to the Midsummer of 1885, as far as it may be possible to do so. Any Statistics that you can yourself furnish me with in advance of your own Septr. Report, will be also esteemed a high favour. Your recommendation to other Librarians to do the like will be an increased favour to me, and a great advantage to the book. . . .

On 1st September, 1883, Edwards wrote to Mr. Peter Cowell, chief librarian of the Liverpool Public Libraries:—

My grateful thanks wait upon you for the kind expressions in your obliging letter of Augt. 30,—very welcome to a veteran, now but "lingering" on the stage of human affairs. By book-parcel I send four copies of my Prosps., etc. I may, perhaps, be pardoned for somewhat over-eagerly desiring that I may obtain subscribers enough to the intended new Edn. of *Memrs. of Libs.*—to warrant me in venturing to print. I have worked on the revision and addns. under sore discouragements. When I left Queen's Coll. Libry. in Oxford,—

after the completion of my catalogue and re-arrangement there,—I took a brief vacn. at Grasmere and in Scotland. I then returned to work on *Memoirs* in Oxford (June, or July, 1876) and worked on, to the best of my power, until April, 1877,—without earning one single sixpence for daily bread. Long before the Christmas of 1876, I was become so poor that I had to work with a lead pencil on the blank pages of a big book, for sheer inability to spare money for paper, pens, and ink. When, at length, I was forced to work upon the Caln. of the "Carte Papers" in the Bodn., I had been more than eleven months without . . . the least remunerative employment—striving to find a publisher. P.S.—Forgive the garrulity of an old man, over-intent upon his own small concerns.

On 29th April, 1884, Alderman James Hibbert, then Vice-chairman of the Preston Public Library Committee wrote:—

. . . I shall have much pleasure in making a little practical acknowledgment of indebtedness to you in the use I have made of your publications to establish the Free Library upon an adequate footing here, and to further the movement elsewhere. In very truth I should long ago have placed myself in communication with you: asking permission to use your well hewn quarries as freely as I have done. But until I saw your new prospectus of the *Memoirs of Libraries* I believed, never hearing or seeing your name, that you were no longer a sublunary being. Let me hasten to repair my involuntary omission by forwarding you a copy of my *Notes on Free Libraries and Museums* —not certainly with any expectation that you will find anything in the contents with which you are not intimately acquainted, even where the material is not wholly your own. I do not know any whose initiatory labours in creating public opinion in favour of Free Libraries are at all equal to yours, and I have never been able to understand how it is that they have fallen more than is just—"to dumb forgetfulness a prey". I hope, however, that the new edition of your book will bring you your deserts. Pray put my name down as a subscriber.

His correspondence with the Rev. William Dunn Macray, M.A., Ducklington Rectory, Witney, the author of *Annals of the Bodleian Library*, presents several items of interest. On 4th April, 1884, that gentleman wrote that his first report on the Danish archives was then in print. Later on, "I am looking for the second edition of *Memoirs*. But I heard to-day an evil report which I hope is not true that . . . have interposed an unexpected difficulty and object to your reprinting any portion of your former

edition until that is completely sold out. It will be a loss to literature if this should be the case. . . ." On 19th July, 1884, Mr. Macray wrote: "I wish I could help you with your *opus magnum*, but I am quite unable. . . . Your work is distinctly your own: you are master of its subject: and certainly the first instalment, complete in itself, ought to be sure of publication. Upon the success of that the remainder could depend; and I am sure the success will be deserved."

On 13th July, 1885, Edwards wrote:—

... I have been writing very arduously on my book, and am now in a condition to promise to my subscribers the publication of vol. i. (D.V.) in October. The preliminary expenses—indispensable books and transcripts of documents: printing of prospectuses in several forms; advts.; stationery; postages and parcels—exceed £150 (one hundred and fifty pounds) and I paid the first of a series of Bills of Exchange for the printing paper, on Saturday, 4th inst., so that I am quite impoverished. It would be a welcome favour—and a Christian charity too, if you would imitate the example voluntarily set by your acquaintances, . . . both of whom have paid their subns. to "vol. i." in advance. (They are the only two, in addition to one other subscriber, who have as yet done so.) The printing goes on steadily and I have the pleasure to send you a specimen proof herewith. P.S.—I begin work on *Memoirs* at 5 A.M., sometimes at 4:30, as I did last summer—grateful for the capability of doing so. Enclosure by book post.

On 21st July, 1885, to the same:—

My very grateful thanks wait upon you for your very welcome cheque for vol. i. of *Memoirs of Libraries*, which I believe I may promise for some day in Oct. (D.V.) next—and also for your correction of what is certainly an error. Vol. i. is to include London and Oxford, as you rightly infer from former Prosp. Hence my inquiries about Bodley. If there is, or should presently be anything in print about recent matters, communication will deeply oblige. . . . Much of vol. iii. has been already rewritten. I have renewed my old habit of sitting down to writing table about 5 A.M., but have to leave off early. I cannot work "all round the dial"—as once of yore.

P.S.—My poor 600 or 700 books—the remnant of very nearly 5,000<sup>1</sup> volumes—more than 4/5 of wh. have had to be converted into "bread

<sup>1</sup> This seems a large number, but it is not likely that there were many of intrinsic value. He gathered as opportunity occurred, and there may have been gifts of books from the several noblemen whose libraries he catalogued.

and cheese"—all bear or are in course of receiving the enclosed label, and I have made a will to like purpose—"creditors" permitting.

To Mr. Spencer George Perceval, Henbury, Bristol, Edwards wrote on 27th October, 1884, acknowledging subscription to the second edition:—

... I have thought that my original . . . prospectus of Feb. 1882 might possibly be interesting enough to form part of your gift (D.V.) to South Kensington Museum. . . . I may add (as your eye will fall upon a little "footnote" in the prospectus of 1882 referring to a Civil List pension, that the proposition was renewed in May, 1883, and was again refused by me. My answer was this: "To apply would, if the favour were granted, take away half the solace, and all the grace" of the Royal Bounty. At that moment I was absolutely without any remunerative employment whatsoever. The application was then made to Mr. Gladstone, without my co-operation. He delayed his answer until August. I had then only a very small employment for *Encyclopaedia Britannica*; was in utter poverty and in failing health. . . .

There are other letters and copies of letters from Edwards in the possession of the writer, but they all tell very much the same story. Edwards was evidently cheered during this trying period by the cordiality of many of his correspondents. He derived pleasure and aid from the letters of Mr. Falconer Madan, M.A., sub-librarian at the Bodleian Library, Mr. W. H. Allnutt, and others known in the library world. The printing of the book was finally stopped in January, 1886, and Edwards died on the following 7th February. All through 1885 there was turmoil over the book. Mr. G. A. Brannon, of Newport, Isle of Wight, the printer of the second edition, has supplied the writer with every detail in connection with this book. A wealthy author could not have been better treated than was Edwards by his printer. He was in full sympathy with the earnest enthusiasm of the old man over his book, and gave time and thought to the work which, even under the most hopeful circumstances, could not have been repaid. There remains in his mind no resentment, nor did he at the time blame Mr. Edwards. The debt at the last was a considerable one, as may be gathered,

and until the present writer traced the sheets of the first volume of the second edition, they had scarcely been disturbed since they were packed away in 1886. The excitement of those days must have weighed heavily on the aging and wearied spirit of the old man. The position was an exceptionally peculiar one, and it would be impossible to distribute blame in any one quarter. Creation in her birth-pangs produces life. The fragment of Edwards' second edition of his *Memoirs of Libraries*, printed in 1885, of which it was possible for the present writer to present 497 copies to librarians and others interested in library work, was produced with much tribulation on the part of Edwards and his printer. The world of books and writers has its martyrs as well as the field of battle. In the roll of the former Edwards' name deserves a place. The whole of the existing MS. for the second edition of *Memoirs of Libraries* is in all probability in the possession of the present writer. What it may be possible to do with this in the future cannot for the moment be decided. A kindly paragraph in the *Athenæum* respecting this fragment, referred, naturally, to the absence of an index as being tantalising. The view is shared wholly by the one responsible for its issue. But it seemed to him that the most reverent way of treating the fragment was to issue it exactly as it left the hands of Edwards, under the peculiar circumstances which have been indicated. Should it be found practicable to issue one or more volumes, the absence of the index to the first volume can be then repaired.

Among the last words which Edwards wrote in the first edition of *Memoirs of Libraries* are these on page 1069: "Here, for the present, at all events, I close a task which has been the occasional employment and the chief delight of some of the best years of my life. The difficulties under which it may, at times, have been pursued will form no excuse for the shortcomings of performance; nor indeed can they claim to have been other than the usual incidents of a protracted task. At some such times, I have ventured to indulge the hope that, whatever its defects, certain things

in this book may, perhaps, be a source of help and encouragement to future librarians when the writer shall have passed away. And I would fain hope so still." The words will find a response in the heart and brain of many librarians.

The following letter will serve to show upon what terms he was with the Lord Willoughby de Broke family :—

Kineton House, Warwick, 1st October, 1882. Dear Mr. Edwards,—  
I am quite shocked and distressed at looking at the date of your note.—  
The evil habit of procrastination. Before thanking you for your kind letter, I thought I would mention your wish to my son; and then circumstances interposed which prevented my seeing him for a few days, and then he went away from home for a few days. But in his absence I have seen his wife—and that is the same thing. She is sure that he will gladly accede to your request that his name should appear as a subscriber to your valuable work, and she will tell him that it is so, for I am going to Yorkshire to-morrow for a fortnight, and so can no longer delay writing to you. You ask me if I remember you. How can I ever forget those old days and all belonging to them, and the great and friendly interest you took not only in your valuable work, but in our surroundings. I have had heavy and great sorrows since, and am even now mourning for my second daughter . . . who was taken from us early this year; but those who precede us to our real Home above, draw us gently from thinking *too much* of this world. With my kind regards and apologies for not having written before,—  
Believe me, yours very sincerely, G. Willoughby de Broke.

## CHAPTER IX.

### THE HOMELY SIDE AND LIFE AMONG HIS BOOKS.

Of this unwearable man the hours of mere recreation and of comparative idleness seem to have continued, throughout life, hardly less fruitful in results of some sort than the hours of deliberate and strenuous labour.

*—Life of Raleigh.*

BURIED deep down among the papers acquired by the present writer were two letters which were evidently much treasured by Edwards. These were the first and last letters received from his wife, and are characteristic in more ways than one. The first is dated 13th March, 1835, and reads:—

Miss Hayward presents her compliments to Mr. Edwards, and returns his book with many thanks. Miss Hayward has just received the other two volumes, and will return them in less than a fortnight, and hopes she shall not intrude upon Mr. Edwards' kindness by keeping them so long. 28 South Bank, Regent's Park.

Then follows the other and last.

8th June, 1876. My dear Edward, I received your letter from Grasmere last evening. I was not surprised to hear of your locality. I hope you will enjoy your old haunts once again. I am glad you have seen some one about your deafness, but it will no doubt take some time before you receive any benefit from it. It has now been of such long standing.

I am not able to tell you much good news of self and ailments: I bore up all last week against them, but yesterday I was so very ill I sent for Ballard. Perhaps you would like to write to him about charge, etc. I shall make myself out better as soon as I am able, but I have been very, very ill, I can assure you. I enclose you a slip: it was sent to me in a few lines from my sister remembering to have heard me mention the name in connection with the B(ritish) M(useum). The weather has been very cold and dreary for the last few days. I hope you may find it improve soon. I have no news of any sort

to tell you. I should like to get a change if I could, but in my present state I should only be a nuisance to any one. We go on in much the same rambling manner as usual, but I do not want much attention, I am happy to say. If you would like the *Standard* sent, I will send it to you. I do not know if the direction you sent is sufficient. I cannot remember if there ought to be any county added to Grasmere—if so you must tell me in your next letter. Of course you will visit all your old haunts. Has there been much alteration made in the place? I will let you know how I am going on, and will keep Ballard as little time as I can. You must excuse this scrawl—but I am too ill to write much.

God bless you. Yours very affectionately, M. F. Edwards.

Does the Church-yard look as it used, or the Church?

Edwards' endorsement of the letters just quoted is, "This is the last letter, I think, that I ever received from Margaretta, and I have just been reading the first one of very nearly forty-two years earlier date. Oxford, 2nd January, 1877." She died on 30th December, 1876, at the age of seventy-four. On the monument in Lawford Churchyard, near Manningtree, there is, on one side, this inscription: "Margaretta Frances Edwards for nearly 33 years the wife of Edward Edwards of Iffley Road, Oxford, Born in London, April 7, 1803, Died at Hampstead, Dec. 30, 1876. Buried in Kensal Green Cemetery, aet. 74. Her life was chequered with sore trials. She is deeply lamented: But with the grief that is brightened by faith in Christ. Thy mercy, O Lord, is in the heavens, with Thee is the fountain of life. In Thy light shall we see light."

Both for the grave at Lawford and the one in Kensal Green Cemetery Edwards paid for flowers to the last. Among his papers are receipts and letters showing this.

The marriage took place by license on 11th June, 1844, in the parish of St. Pancras, London. On the last page of the last diary, 1884, he has made a border round the date of her death, 30th December, and written "My dear wife". He often mentions the reading of some book aloud to her. She took long walks with him, and clearly shared a good deal of his life. Beyond this there is no need to penetrate or to surmise.

His private album has been carefully preserved among

his belongings. In this he has written, "With one exception only . . . this album is exclusively confined to portraits of relatives and friends of its owner, and to views of places at which he has lived or visited frequently". Three photographic portraits have been found which were thought to be pictures of Edwards at different periods of life, and it was hoped that one at least would be identified as his portrait by some survivor who knew him. But unfortunately this has not been found possible, and it is doubtful, as these three are not of him, whether a portrait of him is in existence. Messrs. A. & C. Black, the publishers, wrote asking him to send a photograph of himself for their album of contributors to the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, but he never sent one. He seems to have shrunk from the ordeal of sitting for his portrait, and his modesty in this direction is indicative of the man's nature. On 5th August, 1873, he wrote from Queen's College, Oxford, to Dr. Crestadoro, then chief librarian at Manchester:—

I am in receipt of your favour of the 31st ult. Your request is a flattering one, but it is, entirely, out of my power to comply with it. I have never sat for a photograph, and it was only in the days of youthful vanity that I ever sat for a portrait of any kind. The last occasion is, I think, about thirty-five years distant. You will probably think it a "crotchet," but nevertheless I have always entertained a strong dislike to photography for portraiture. I yield to none in admiration of it for buildings and for many other like purposes, but I do venture to think, that in order to have a "portrait" worthy the name, you must first catch your painter.

He was very comfortable in his last lodgings in Oxford, from which address so much of his early correspondence referring to the second edition of the *Memoirs of Libraries* was dated. He always remembered the birthdays of the daughter of Mrs. Chapman in whose house he lived. In 1878 he gave her Tristram's *Bible Places*, which is inscribed "With the giver's best wishes; and also with the earnest hope that, as years roll on, this small book may, in its degree, tend to promote her thorough familiarity with, and her deep reverence for, the greatest, the best, and the most

enduring of all books". On the occasion of the following birthday he presented a copy of the *Christian Year*, and immediately after he had settled at Niton, some other books. Those with whom he lived still remember him with kindness and esteem. Some letters on both sides are in the writer's hands, and they show that he was not by any means difficult to live with, nor always in one unending state of quarrelsomeness. It is a fair test of any man's character to observe what was his standard of home life, and Edwards emerges from this test as well as most men, including those who are not engaged in engrossing literary researches. He wrote to his former landlady on 10th September, 1883: "I shall wait upon you at the beginning of next month, when a very small something will be due to me from Her Most Gracious Majesty, whom may God preserve and bless. Hitherto it is I that have had the happiness of making sundry small and humble payments to Her Majesty's income from time to time." This is a playful reference to the income tax, which he paid during his palmy Oxford days, when he was receiving about £300 a year. On 17th November, 1883, he wrote:—

Please to give to your Elfrida my kindest regards, and to ask her to look upon the little volume which comes to her, by book post, as only an earnest of something gayer and more attractive—if all be well with me—by and bye. . . . I am writing to you after correcting, for the printer, forty columns of closely printed matter, and, therefore, as you will easily believe, with a very tired hand, but I do not like to lose this post. . . . With very kindest wishes.

On 7th October, 1885:—

. . . My poverty deprives me of the gratification of visiting Oxford, for the present, and of seeing you again: but I trust to have the pleasure of hearing of your welfare and prosperity. . . . I hope that you had both (of your boys) with you for awhile in the summer to cheer you amidst your labours and anxieties.

There are many letters referring to his votes for hospitals and asylums. To the Wanstead Orphan Asylum he seems to have been a subscriber for many years. When he took an interest in a case it was not a desultory attention which he

gave to it. The Ear and Throat Infirmary; Emigration Home for Destitute Little Girls; Night Refuge and Home for Deserving Men, Women and Children; and others were among those receiving his monetary aid. His correspondence in connection with these charitable gifts of his must have been considerable, judging by the number of letters recovered, which cover only a few years. During his residence at Wimbledon, he came to know intimately a family where there were two little girls. He sent a small present to one of them, and she wrote back: ". . . This lace collarette is indeed beautiful, and will be only worn upon very special occasions, when I will not fail at the same time to think gratefully of the good and kind gentleman who gave it to me. I am sure if you had any little girls beside you they would love you very much. In return I have nothing to send you beyond my thanks, but if you will kindly accept the two photographs herewith of myself and sister, you will give us all much pleasure."

Dr. Henry Hemsted and Mr. Henry A. Dowse, now living, nephews of Mrs. Edwards, were at the Blue Coat School when Edwards was engaged at the British Museum. On numerous occasions he would call for them at the school and take them on the top of an omnibus to his house, and for walks in the park. Both gentlemen retain a very kindly recollection of him. They never, as boys, were afraid to ask him questions. He was always delighted to give them information, and gave it in such a way as pleased the boys. A man who is loved by boys is usually a man worth knowing. With Dr. Hemsted he had a long and interesting correspondence continued well on to the end of the seventies. It is to him he inscribed the *Handbook to the Literature of General Biography*.

Edwards was a painstaking reader, and his reading covered a vast and varied field of literature. He was evidently an omnivorous reader, and had a retentive memory for all that was noteworthy in the books he read. The faculty of being able to rapidly discriminate what is worth reading, and what can be left unread in any book,

is of very slow acquirement, and there are not many who can hope to attain a safe standard in this kind of swift appreciation. But it is worth striving for, as will be owned by all book-lovers, especially at the present moment, when the multiplication of books makes the need for cultivating the faculty more urgent than ever. The bookish spirit of Edwards was part of the man, and his markings of approved passages and annotations, and his criticisms, reveal his inner life more than perhaps anything else could possibly have done. His better self is shown, and his intensely religious mind displays itself throughout the notes which he wrote in his books of devotion. His Bible contains his autograph and the words, "Sandgate, 25th April, 1861 (St. Mark's Day)". Pencil marks show the number of chapters in the aggregate of the books of the Old Testament, and the number of chapters forming the New Testament. The first chapter of Genesis bears the dates, "Oxf. Dec. 1875, and Niton, Advent Sunday 1884". To some passages he has appended the Tyndale or the Coverdale rendering. The dates here given are entered at the head of the first chapter of Matthew. "V(irginia) W(ater) Surrey, 26 March 1880. Colwell, I.W. 3 October 1880. Oxf. 6 Nov. 1881. Oxf. 14 May 1882. Oxford 1 Jany. 1883. Oxford 11 June 1883. Niton 8 Dec. '83. Niton 20 Feb. '84. Niton 16 July '84. Niton 21 Feb. '85." There are about three hundred and fifty notes and entries in his Bible, and these reveal the devout spirit of the man. Next to his Bible the book nearest to his heart and soul was Keble's *Christian Year: Thoughts in Verse for the Sundays and Holydays Throughout the Year*. His copy was the edition of 1863, and he has written in pencil on the title-page some notes on the 120 editions which the book had passed through up to 1884. He inscribes it "To my dear Wife—For New Year's Day 1864. Blenheim, Oxon. 30 Dec. 1863. E. E." This book was the companion of his days and nights, and must have been a source of great comfort to the lonely old man. It is packed with additions in the shape of transcripts from

other poets, entries of the different dates on which he read the various poems, quotations and comments of his own. He seems to have used the *Christian Year* as a kind of composite confessional album, birthday book, and private diary, in which are recorded his wanderings, hopes, fears, and the consolation which he found in times of stress and trial. Lovers of the *Christian Year* will know the intensely soothing spirit that prevails throughout the book. This was one of the ends and purposes of the work, especially for those who felt the need of spiritual comfort and solace from the Book of Common Prayer. At the end of the book there are these original verses by Edwards: "Lines written in a copy of the *Christian Year*—although very unworthy—presented at Christmas, to a near Relative, now lamented".

O may the precious blessings,  
 Of all true *Christian Years*,  
 The constant love of all we love ;  
 Freedom from earthborn fears :—

And, chief, that crowning mercy  
 Of our holy Christmastide—  
 The love of Him who came to save :  
 The Faith in Him who died

That we might live, as ransomed ones,  
 Cleansed from all sinful stain—  
 Be yours and mine, through weal or woe :  
 In health, and joy ; in grief and pain.

May these be our's, whilst yet we cross  
 The troubled Sea of Time ;  
 May these be our's, until, at length,  
 We reach the heavenly clime.

Faith, then, her sight shall yield, and we  
 Above shall meet, to part no more—  
 But sing, for aye, redeeming love,  
 Upon the blissful shore.

—E.

It is clear from this that Edwards would not have made a reputation in poetry. The lines were written about 1863.

He has carefully entered in the margin the dates upon which the saints' days fall. Beginning with St. Andrew's Day on 30th November and ending with All Saints' Day on 1st November, sixteen dates are given in careful order. He seemed to have these dates off by heart. Some of his letters, inscriptions in his books, the entries in his Bible, Prayer-book and *Christian Year* are full of this evidence. A certain passage would be read on "St. Simon's Day". The last date upon which any quotations are copied is 1882. He had not left any more space in the ample margins for additional verses. On several occasions throughout the book he has corrected the printer in his pointing. If there was a semicolon instead of a comma he set the matter right in his own copy. His readings of the poems throughout the year are systematically entered. Several times there appears this remark, "Read with a specially grateful heart". One of these is dated 7th December, 1884. To the poem for the fourth Sunday in Advent, he has written at the end of it, "Read in much pain, but with comfort and gratitude," at Ventnor, 22nd December, 1878, and again, 24th December. This poem he seems to have read for the last time on 20th December, 1885, after his exposure on St. Catherine's Down. Against the poem headed "The Holy Innocents" he has entered these dates: Ventnor, 28th December, 1878, Oxford, 1879, Manningtree, 1880, Oxford, 1881, Oxford, 1882, Niton, 1883, Niton, 1884, Niton, 1885. In each case 28th December is added. This list of dates illustrates the system which prevails throughout the book. The last date written in the book is 24th January, 1886, and this is against the poem for the third Sunday after Epiphany, and must have been entered between two and three weeks before his death. The poem for Easter Day is carefully marked and various passages are underlined. One entry at this reads, "Niton 13th April 1884, (6.40. A.M., before Holy Communion)". There are also two entries showing that the poem was referred to at Virginia Water, 13th April, 1879, and again at the same place, 28th March, 1880.

To the poem for the fourth Sunday after Easter there are many additions, some of them being lines or sentences of his own, which he was, perhaps, of opinion, would have been better. The fourth line in the third verse reads, "Where still He shines on Abraham's race". Edwards in the margin gives as an alternative reading the words "sheds peculiar grace," evidently regarding them as an improvement. Another poem has written against it, "Ventnor, I.W., 20th July, 1879, day of a memorably surging and billowing sea, little like its usual aspect at this time of year". On page 201 a text is quoted, "And seekest thou great things for thyself? seek them not". This he has underlined, and added, "Stretford, Sept. 1858". This was the time of his troubles at Manchester. He was at Shirburn in August, 1861, and has entered in the margin the place and date just named with the text, "There are not found that returned to give glory to God, save this stranger". He gave several copies of this book as presents. In one of these he wrote:—

Some of the notes in this volume have been inserted in the hope that, some day, when the hand that now writes them shall have long lain at rest (in God's good and gracious time), they may be found of some use *educationally*, for those who are as yet unthought of. This precious and most lovable book of John Keble has, over and above its grand and noble devotional uses, also its valuable, say rather its invaluable, uses for the right training of children, to be good subjects, as well as good Christians. The receiver of the volume will (D.V.) understand well what is here meant, in the years to come—at present the notes may seem somewhat out of place.—E. E.

His copy of the *Lyra Apostolica* is marked in a similar way to his beloved Keble, and his Prayer-book has also in it very many entries. A few of his notes on the books he read from time to time, which are scattered throughout the diaries, may be given without appending the dates. "Began *Memoirs of Sir Fowell Buxton*—an instructive portraiture of a man more remarkable for innate energy and force of will than for mental power, though in that respect not ill endowed. Finished Stoughton's very in-

teresting Memorials of the Puritans, entitled very appropriately *Spiritual Heroes*, which many of them truly were." He must have never been without a book near at hand. During the excitement of the Parliamentary Committee of 1849 he enters, "Walked with intention to go to Hampstead, but met with a tumble and forced to return, spoiling Lamartine's speech on the Single chamber question, which I was reading when I fell—returned covered with clay". Dear man, this is not likely to have been the only accident of the same nature. The following will serve to show how omnivorous was his reading.

Read Wordsworth's ever fresh and beautiful *White Doe of Rylston*, and *Ode on Immortality*, of which I never tire.

Delightful walk towards . . . reading Carlyle's *Latter Day Pamphlets*, a melancholy affair (and then gives the best part of a page of his diary to a criticism).

Read part of Froude's *Bunyan*, differing widely from much of his criticism, it is impossible not to admire and enjoy the skill of the narrative part.

Began "Curer Bell," clever, racy and rough. Read on my ramble Washington Irving's *Life of Goldsmith*, a pleasantly written book, but wanting the geniality and charm of Forster's.

Continued *Life of Robespierre*, which I have read with pleasure. Although containing little that is new it is the best and most coherent narrative of that instructive career which I have seen.

Began Browning's new poem *Christmas Eve and Easter Day*—a vein of true poetry in it, but sadly embedded in shale and rubbish. Great thoughts are there nevertheless and sometimes grandly clothed.

Read a small portion of Longfellow's admirable translation of the *Inferno*—comparing it with the original. It is the closest and I think the truest of the translations into English.

Looked at Warburton's *Memoirs of Prince Rupert and the Cavaliers*, a book containing a few interesting letters and a great many amusing anecdotes, but wretchedly edited—as if with a pitchfork.

Continued *Memoirs of Lord Cloncurry*, a rich storehouse of information on history of Ireland since '95, very vigorously written.

Read *Margaret Maitland* (Passages in the Life of) a very simple, homely and sterling story of Scotch manse life in its best aspect—earnest and true-hearted.

Read also Carlyle's *Downing Street*, better, much better, than the crude trash about prisons, but still rather declamatory about the necessity of getting a wise government than indicating how to set about it.

Finished Leigh Hunt's *Autobiography*: 3 vols. His books very pleasant and genial—but he certainly gets too courtly and too apt to apologise for some of the sayings and doings of his youth.

Read Marsh's *Mordaunt Hall*, a disjointed, slipshod affair. Continued *Life of Robespierre*, although containing little that is new it is the best and most coherent narrative of that instructive career which I have seen.

Continued Curzon's *Visits to the Levant Monasteries*. The book is lively and graphic, but gives no indication of a mind above mediocrity in grasp or range. But the author's perceptive faculties greatly transcend his reflective ones.

Finished Mrs. Oliphant's *Life of Edward Irving*, in speaking of whom as saint and martyr I do not think his excellent biographer one whit over-rates the man, whatever the temporary errors of the theologian or the priest.

Continued the *Memoir of Lacordaire*, an interesting and yet a very poor biography. Not even a clear account of his actual relations with Rome can be obtained from the book—which is much more like a vague eulogy than a “Life”.

Continued Froude's *History of England*. I think it a very able work, but with too many documents thrust into the text instead of being woven into the narrative, and too great a preference of facts which he has himself disinterred.

Read De Quincey's *Autobiographical Sketches*—as always with pleasure, but with increased regret at the excessive carelessness and breathless haste shewn in nearly every chapter of them: the “errata” would be a curious appendix to them.

Continued Sharon Turner's *England (Middle Ages)*—very vague and unsatisfactory on many grave points, but still a book worth reading. The worst thing perhaps and one of the most obvious, an entire want of careful revision; almost the printers seem to have been left to themselves; the way in which authorities are cited too, is eminently loose and inaccurate.

Read whilst walking *Life and Letters of Southey*. The autobiographical sketch of his boyhood very characteristic, and very full of twaddle. . . . In reading some of the letters of the trend of Southey's life, I was strongly reminded of the early and college correspondence of a very different man—W. E. Channing. Both indulged day dreams of community of property, abolition of human selfishness, etc., but how different the awakening.

Continued *Life of Heylyn* and that of *Hugh Miller*. Lives more diversified than these, can scarcely be imagined, but both of them have, in common, the charm of strongly marked individuality and force of character. The one essentially a man of action though thrown among books, having the best culture, but not always making the noblest use of it—yet the gentleman and the cavalier always visible beneath the

cassock. The other born in lowly life with the humblest education, almost that can be imagined: essentially a man of books; the poet as clearly seen beneath the garb of a mechanic, as was seen eventually by all the world of readers, the man of keen scientific insight, marvelously endowed as an observer of God's glorious works of creation, and ever seeing above the works—and seeing with bowed head and bended knee—the Almighty and all-beneficent Creator.

In the evening continued Kinglake's *Crimea* aloud. The first vol. is almost and wholly devoted to the "Causes of the war". The story is told with very great ability, but in the judgment passed on two eminent actors in the strife Nicholas and Napoleon the scales are held very unequally. The writer is compelled to admit both cunning and falsehood on the part of Nicholas, but yet is found constantly arguing on the assumption that his apparent and avowed objects were his real objects; whilst in dealing with Napoleon he almost always attributes even right and wise actions to corrupt and mean motives; he bases his reiterated assertions that the justifiable objects of England might have been obtained without war on the assumption that the proffered co-operation of Austria and Prussia was trustworthy, and on the further assumption—I must venture to think a most foolish one—that a war postponed in 1853 would have been a war avoided. He can never discuss the Emperor Napoleon's share in the business with any semblance of historical calmness, and thus in his anxiety to deal out telling blows he forgets that some blows hurt the giver more than the receiver.

These are representative examples of the notes scattered through his diaries. He had the common antipathy against publishers and booksellers which most authors cherish. A poor estimate of both pervaded his mind. Among the copy prepared for the *Handbook to the Literature of General Biography*, which was only printed in part, there is a note about *The Peerage of England* . . . by Arthur Collins, in which he states:—

Arthur Collins (1682-1760) began life as a bookseller. But he was a marvellous contrast to the thriving—and the thriven—booksellers of this latter part of the nineteenth century. Most of them—probably, one may say with utmost charity (the charity of truth) unclean—twentieths of them deal in books as other men deal in cheese or in bacon, with just as much of regard for the product, so that it be made "saleable," with small thought or trouble. The greatest book upon the greatest of themes will, as far as the booksellers' influence over it may extend, be spoiled or "scamped," if in that scamped and mauled state it can be made to bring in quicker profits, than if prepared

conscientiously and thoroughly. The utmost success attained in the book-selling trade is often—very often—no security whatever that the eminent publisher's name at the foot of the title gives warrant that the Author has had fair play in being enabled and encouraged, to do his powers at their best without check or hamper from the tradesman. Collins loved Literature far better than he loved money. And in that capacity as in his capacity of Author he never stinted pains. His works are models in their kind. Sir Egerton Brydges' edition of his chief work is admirable. It surpasses, immensely, any subsequent "Peerage," whether bearing the name of "Burke," or "Lodge," or "Foster". It is no demand of the Public that confines a Peerage nowadays to a single volume. It is a mere bookselling trick: just as the enormous use in our day of very small print, is no public requirement, but a joint "trick"—and a detestable one—of booksellers and of printers, who prefer a very little additional profit, to the comfort and the eyesight of that large proportion of their customers and readers who are either aged or advancing towards age.

Booksellers and publishers must find the attacks now and again made upon them quite refreshing to read.

Several of his commonplace books have been preserved, and they contain many notes and annotations. Some of these are not always in good taste. The one now quoted gives an example of a number of proofs where he allows his politics and religion to run away with him.

*Brownlow North (B.A., Oxon.), Records and Recollections.* By the Rev. Kenneth Moody-Stuart, M.A. Published 1878. Inscription, "To my dear Sister, from Edward Edwards, of Niton, April 1884 (G(ood) F(riday))—for Christmas, 1884 (in anticipation of one more meeting—God in His gracious Divine Providence, permitting).

On the page containing the title of book and inscription, as above, and also on the first page of preface, Edwards writes as follows:—

I have always regarded the gift of a book,—whether the present be made to a beloved relative (as now), or to one of those "little children" to whom—(and, the more especially, that in the course of Divine Providence, I have never had the great blessing of enjoying the love of any child of my very own,—I delight to give books that may (D.V.) be enjoyed, and be profited by, when the hand of the giver shall have long lain at rest, and cold, in the grave)—as a testimony of approval of its contents.

That he was a lover of children is shown by this extract. The stroke of a child's hand, the playful lisp of a child's voice, the sound of merry children's voices around the table, leave their impression upon many a life. Those who have experienced these privileges will realise how deep was this man's sense of loneliness. He then continues:—

But, in this instance, I can only approve, partially, of these *Records and Recollections of Brownlow North*, although I have read the volume with a deep interest. Most of it I read during a solitary walk (to Chale) on the most solemn day of the whole "Christian Year," and also the most blessed of all its holy-days, save only one. I love the man's Christian Spirit of self-sacrifice. But I do not love his "Presbyterianism". Every day that I live, I become more deeply attached to "my dear Mother," the Church of England, as by Law Established:—though I had not the blessing of being born, or baptized, in its Communion.

The Church was, at first, "Congregational," that, by the agitation of the lowest strata of Society, the mass, above, of Corruption, Idolatry and Mental Servitude, might be broken up:—it was then 'Synodal,' that the tendency of Separate bodies to Heresy, and to Schism, might be counteracted:—it was, then, 'Episcopal,' that in times of difficulty and of peril the whole Church might act in concert and decisively:—it became 'Papal,' that it might (under God's Divine Providence) oppose a (strong and) Visible Unity to the (Savage) Armies of Mahomet, and to the Barbarians of the North. It then became—under like Divine Providence,—'Monastic,' that Learning, Art, Piety—(the 'Civilities' and the blessed solaces of our troubled life)—might be preserved in (almost) impregnable Retreats, amidst the deluge of ignorance, and of armed oppression: . . . then 'Protestant,' that the Soul might be emancipated from many errors, superstitions, despotisms: then, again, 'partially reformed'—even in the bosom of the Papacy,—lest "Protestant Emancipation" should hurry the whole of Christendom into precipitate and radical innovations, into ruinous changes, and into fatal Infidelity—that "infidelity," which is now so rife amongst us, and which so easily assumes the masque of a "Philosophy" falsely so-called:—even damnable heresies, . . . 'denying the Lord that bought us' (2 Peter ii. 1).

The good author of this volume and also its better "Subject"—Brownlow North himself—wd. have done well to have pondered these "aspects of Church History," before magnifying that narrow "Presbyterianism"—so tenderly:—which (only two hundred and forty years ago) ruined—for a while—our grand Anglican Church, and, for only a season also, destroyed even our Civil and Secular liberties.

Since that most Holy-Day (April 11th, this year) on which I read

great part of this vol., after reading the "Divine Service" of course, and also Canon Liddon's *Divinity of our Blessed Lord Jesus Christ*, I have read *Brownlow North* over again, with increased regard for the memory of a good Christian man and also with increased regret that he ever did anything, or said anything, to weaken that glorious and venerable Church into which it was his happiness to be enrolled from his birth; although for many years he was a disgrace to it. I devoutly and humbly pray God that no Gladstones nor other destructive radical traitors may ever be permitted to rob that Church, or, in any way, to weaken it!

On the last page of the book the following is written by Edward Edwards:—

There's scarce a page within this touching book  
 But gives much cause for earnest thought to One  
 Taught by his Summer spent, his Autumn gone,  
 That "Life" is like a tale of morning grass  
 Withered at Eve!

There are other lines which follow, and his note is  
 "Copied out after a solitary walk on the beach before  
 sunrise. Sunday, 9 Nov. 1884."

In a volume of "Poetry of the Year," with coloured illustrations, given to his sister in 1878, he has written:—

I hope that the intrinsic worth of the few additional "passages," on the Seasons, will prevent them from being looked upon as disfigurements of the pages, despite the scrawling hand which, nowadays, waits upon tried and tired eyes (like to your's). They are written in pencil, because the paper will not bear ink without blotting, as the title-page opposite shows too plainly.

The additions are from Matthew Arnold, Wordsworth, Talfourd, Bern. Barton, Bowles, D. M. Moir and Dean Alford.

In Sir Walter Scott's *Biographical Memoirs* there occur a few interesting notes. A reference to the late Queen causes him to write, "Her charms of character and her 'personal goodness' are of more importance than her personal charms as we all gratefully feel under the rule of Queen Victoria". On one of the blank title-pages of this book he has written:—

*N.B.*—It is much to be wished that the religious character of many of the "subjects" of these *Memoirs*, had been in better harmony, with

their eminent literary or historical character. They have to be read—many of them—with a constant thought of those unhappy educational influences—so hostile to the Religion of the Gospel of our Blessed Lord—which marked, in a sadly pre-eminent degree, the eighteenth century—an age, conspicuous for dreary Formalism, on the one hand, and for shallow scepticism on the other. But every life-career that is told in these volumes, is, on one ground or other, an eminently instructive life. And the incidents of each and of all are told, with exquisite grace—and with generous sympathy—by a man of almost unexampled genius, of a most loving and noble spirit, and gifted with a power of lucid narration to which very few English writers have in any age approached. His gifts as Poet, or as Novelist, are not, I think, a whit more marvellous than are his gifts as a Biographer: And to read him is to love him.<sup>1</sup>

He loved Scott intensely. For light casual reading he was fond of some of Mrs. Oliphant's. Readers were never more in need of reliable finger-posts to lead them to the best and most wholesome streams of thought than in these days. Whether there was about Edwards enough self-forgetfulness to have filled a great place in this way may be doubtful, but he could have rendered a useful service in this direction.

His book-plate was of a simple character. Round it are the words "Rustic Quiet, Prayer and Worship, Friendship, Books". Near the middle of the plate appears his monogram and a stag or antelope. Search has been made at the College of Arms, and the only connection found is that in 1728 there was a grant of arms to Thomas Edwards, of St. Martin's-in-the-Fields, of which the crest was a stag under an oak tree. In the arms of the Edwards' families the crest which has most affinity to the one he used is said to belong to a family connected with Cornwall, Devon and Shropshire. On the envelopes of a few of his letters a seal is used upon which this motto appears, with the stag or antelope. "Omnis fortuna ferendo <sup>et</sup> peranda est" (Every fortune is to be overcome by enduring). The use of the crest and motto indicates his belief that he was of gentle ancestry.

<sup>1</sup> Many words are underlined in the original.

## CHAPTER X.

### HIS MOTHER AND SISTERS AT MANNINGTREE.

... It must be worth while to ascertain something about the extraction, as well as the immediate parentage, of a conspicuous man, were it only for the chance that incidental light may so be thrown on some dark problem or other in his own career. And the influence upon the ordinary events of life, of blood-alliance and family connection, is one of too obvious a sort to need insisting on.

—*Life of Raleigh.*

AFTER the death of Edwards' father in 1847 his mother and sisters lived at several addresses in London. He helped the elder sister Charlotte with the necessary fees to pass through some of the classes of a normal training school for teachers. The family took up their residence in Manningtree, Essex, in May, 1851, and opened a girls' school. It appears likely that their brother's loss of his British Museum appointment and salary had something to do with the rapid maturing of plans. The school, so far as pupils were concerned, was never very large. The first house in which they lived is still shown, and here a brass plate duly announced that the Misses Edwards kept a preparatory school for young ladies. There were three or four changes of residence during their life at Mistley, which is part of Manningtree, although it possesses a separate local administration. The writer possesses a long series of letters from the sisters to the brother, covering a period ranging from 1854 to 1885, and these are all dated from Manningtree. They reveal the warm affection which must have existed between Edwards and his mother and sisters. The correspondence is of a simple family nature, but the trend of it throughout is that of a close and mutually helpful family love. They tell of the unstinting monetary help which Edwards gave to them, as

long as the mother and sister Charlotte lived (for both died in 1864), and to Elizabeth up to the last weeks of his own life: even though his income during a long stretch of years was of a very limited nature. All honour to this man who gave bountifully of his affection, and unsparingly of his means, to those near and dear to him. The nobility of this side of his character is as clear as letters and personal accounts can make it. A brave heart battled within him, but he was carried along at times like a piece of floating wreck driven hither and thither by the force of the waves. But all through, those in the nest in the little Essex town had the wealth of his love poured upon them, their memory was cherished, after they were gone, up to the end of his days. Homely virtues must ever take a large place in the estimation of the worth of every man or woman, whether they take part in actions which set great forces moving, or merely occupy a humble place at the great table of life where gather the millions of humanity. This man emerges from the test of living up to the highest and purest of the domestic virtues, with conspicuous honour, if the letters which passed between his family and himself—and were never written for publication—reveal anything. They breathe a spirit which is alike creditable and honourable to all concerned. On 30th August, 1851, he made his first visit to Manningtree. He was then engaged in buying books in London for the Manchester Library. He says in his diary, "Found my dear mother in pretty good health and spirits . . . prospects of school not good". His stay on that occasion was short. In the autumn of the following year he made his second visit. It was during these visits that he became known among the girls in the school as the "wonderful brother". This arose from the sisters constantly speaking about him and quoting him to the girls in the school. In August, 1854, he was again at Manningtree, and "with my dear mother nearly all day. Read to her out of Chalmers' noble discourses on religion." At the end of that year one of the sisters writes: "We were quite glad dear Edward that

you escaped safely from that noisy meeting. We never read or heard of such work. It was enough to frighten any one out of their wits. I suppose there were no ladies present." There is reason to think that the meeting to which reference is here made was a meeting to promote the adoption of the Public Library Act. The meetings for the promotion of the library movement in those days were as a rule noisy enough in all conscience. The letter finishes with this sentence: "Our school money this quarter is every shilling owing, so we do not know what will be the consequence, bread and provisions generally, being so dear, make such a great difference, it is quite a serious thing". On 28th April, 1856, they write, "We found no difficulty in reading your kind letter, and dear mother says that although her eyes are old, she can always read your writing without trouble". And a little later the mother had instructed the writer of the letter to tell him that "she is much grieved to find that you write so late at night. We are sure it is likely to injure your health and that sooner or later you will feel it." He was with them in August, 1856, and the reports of the prospects in the little school were not encouraging. There is something inexpressibly sad when ladies of refinement are left to earn a living. There were few years for a considerable period that he was not at Manningtree in the autumn. At the very end of 1859, "We are anxious dear Edward to know whether you have been successful through the advertisement or in any other way". It was nearing Christmas, and the letter finishes with, "We all wish you may enjoy a pleasant Christmas. I know you will not forget us in our solitariness. We shall have a very dull one or rather none at all." On 15th May, 1860, "Dear mama was very pleased to receive your beautiful letter. God grant that in due time it may be answered." A month later, "We are very sorry to hear that you have had so much hurry and fatigue with your Edinburgh work," and again about the same date, "We feel grieved dear Edward to think you apply so closely and trust it will not injure

your health. I should think it must make it pleasant to have children in the house, particularly as you were always fond of children." In October, "We have to thank you for the newspaper. We saw a long account of the meeting of the Science Congress at Glasgow. It must have been a splendid gathering. Lord Brougham must be a remarkable man indeed. We saw your name in the list. Mama spied it out." Edwards had contributed a paper on libraries to the Congress. In the last letter in 1860 :—

Dear mother sends her most affectionate love and thanks for your very kind letter and remittance. She wishes me to say that she takes it exceedingly kind in your sending what you have, and so early in the week too. She wishes she could write a few loving words to you on your birthday, but that is not in her power in her weak state, but you know dear Edward that you have her best wishes and prayers, in which we both most cordially unite.

In September, 1862, he says in his diary: ". . . Had much grave and some cheerful talk with my beloved mother, who sat up in her room for two hours or so, and spoke far more easily and cheerily than I could have hoped. She is sadly worn, but her dear face is but little altered in features or expression." On the following day he enters, "Had a solemn and most touching interview with my beloved mother—concluding with earnest prayer with her and with my sisters. May God in His great mercy grant that the impressions thus produced on my mind may not be transient, and that the supplications thus humbly offered in the name of the one Great Mediator may in His good time and way be answered." A few days later he is back in the Isle of Wight, and enters in his diary on a Sunday: "Attended the Holy Communion. At the beginning with sad stony indifference, but afterwards with impressions which I earnestly pray may not be merely transient. On leaving church had a long, quiet and meditative walk. . . . The day a splendid and impressively Sabbatical one." His financial help to his family that year amounted to over forty-one pounds.

Then in June, 1863, "Our beloved mother sends her warmest love to you and desires me to tell you that she had very great pleasure in reading your letter, it is the only thing that she can read now, and it is such a comfort to her that she can do that". Shortly afterwards, "Dear mother often expresses her regret that you are so far off. She says it would be such a comfort to her to see you often. . . . I am quite sorry dear Edward that you have been all this time alone. It must be so dull for you, and I don't know how you manage so long without your wife, and I am surprised she likes to be away so much." On 20th June, 1863, "Our beloved mother sends her warmest love and thanks to you for your very kind letter, etc., . . . dear mother says she hopes when you make another remove you will not pitch your tent so far from Manningtree". In September, 1863, he is at Manningtree, and "spent much of the day afterwards with my mother who had some grave, earnest and touching conversation with me at times when she was able to speak with me. . . . Promised to do all I could for my sisters for her sake as well as for theirs. . . ." On the 18th "took a hurried tearful farewell of my mother and sisters". There were premonitions that the end was coming for the mother. On this page of the diary there is written some years later these words:—

This was the last farewell in life. I did not see my beloved mother's face again until I saw it in the solemn calmness of death on the 25th January, 1864, the day after her departure. In my great grief I had then the happy consciousness that I could not remember to have seen that dear face with any expression other than that of love: and the firm conviction that by God's grace and through the sole merits of our blessed Lord's atonement, I shall hereafter have the inexpressible happiness of seeing it again in a better world.

The letters during the mother's last illness are very pathetic. He was then at Shanklin. He received the note that she was dying on the Sunday morning, and there being no boat he could not start for Manningtree on that day. At five on the Monday morning he was on his way. He remained some days with his sisters. At the end of

the same year the elder sister died unexpectedly, and he went forthwith to share the sorrow with his remaining sister, Elizabeth Margaret. His income during 1864 was £78 15s., made up of £28 15s. from the Duke of Marlborough for the report upon the Blenheim Library, and two items of £25 each from his publishers. Of this he sent £45 1s. 3d. to his mother and sisters. Fortunately he had, what was to him, a considerable sum left over from the previous year. At the end of his diary for that year there is a little sketch plan of the grave where his mother and sister were buried. Dr. Merivale, the historian of Rome and translator of Homer, better known as Dean Merivale, was then the rector of Lawford Church, which is about two miles from Manningtree. It was said at Manningtree that Edwards was much like Dr. Merivale in appearance. Edwards did not greatly admire him as a preacher, for of one sermon he says, "Dr. Merivale preached, scholarly and coldly". It may be doubted whether any one could visit Lawford Church without being struck with the rural beauty of its surroundings. Situated in the midst of fields, and looking like a huge park, on all sides of which there are belts of fine trees, it is the very ideal of a place in which to rest when one is done with work. The river Stour, winding on its course with numerous little boats on its surface, and the little town of Manningtree in the distance, lend completeness to the scene. Edwards, himself an anchorite, must have felt the glamour of this haven of rest in an especial way. It must have filled his soul, and it is no wonder that he should have several times, during 1864, passionately expressed in his diary the wish that he should be buried in the same grave as his mother and sister in the Lawford Churchyard.

The remaining sister lived on alone at Manningtree. In August, 1866, Edwards was with her, and visited Lawford Church. He enters in his diary: "Found the grave of my loved mother and sister very neglected. If God shall in His Almighty wisdom bless my present efforts,

I hope to remedy this, and to place to them some poor memorial stone." He was then engaged upon his *Life of Raleigh*, for which he was to receive one hundred and fifty guineas, increased to a larger sum at a later date. He attended the service, and "Mr. Merivale preached in his usual perfunctory and lifeless style". On 9th March, 1867, Elizabeth writes:—

I return you many thanks for your remittance. . . . I am very glad to hear you are making such satisfactory progress with your *Life of Raleigh*, and hope you will reap a rich reward. It must be a work of great labour. . . . I anticipate another Sabbath alone to-morrow. Pray for me my dear brother that I may submit to my Heavenly Father's will in being thus afflicted, but I sometimes think it hard to be left here to drag on such a dull life. . . . What do you think of Mr. Binney's hymn?

The hymn, of which a written copy was enclosed in the letter, was Dr. Binney's "Eternal Light, eternal Light". Then on 30th June, "I am rejoiced to hear that you are daily gaining strength, and trust you will continue to do so. . . . Many thanks dear for your remittance for which I am thankful. The want of what you have before so regularly supplied makes it doubly welcome." Two months later:—

It grieves me to be any additional anxiety to you, though I know what you do for me, you do ungrudgingly. . . . Are you seeking to obtain a librarianship? I do trust you will be able to meet with a permanency. It would be such a relief to you and to all of us. Is your book ready yet? . . . I enjoyed reading your Devonshire book. It is very interesting. (In October), Your letter has grieved me very much. I do trust you will not give way to despondency. The Lord never has forsaken those that put their trust in Him. These trials are hard, very hard to bear, and especially I think when poverty and sickness go together, and being so solitary I cannot but think it falls more heavily upon me. . . . My dear brother you speak of affliction souring the temper. I trust that will not be the case with us, by God's help it shall not sour mine though I have something to bear. . . .

In the summer of 1867 he took her to Felixstowe and Dovercourt, as she had been failing in health. One of the sweetest things in English literature is Charles

Lamb's loving care of his sister Mary. Edwards' care of his sister Elizabeth may be classed with that record of brotherly devotion. A little later she writes, "I am glad to hear what you say about the Weigh House Chapel, though I may never see the old place again, nor ever hear Mr. Binney's voice again". In the following year (1868) he was in a weak state of health, and there are many blanks in his diary. On 4th October, 1873, she wrote:—

... I thank you most sincerely for what you have sent me now, as well as in all times past. All I have to give you in return is my warmest love and affection, but you will have your reward from Him who knows all about it. When you write tell me how you are, and if you are relieved at all, of your deafness. I am anxious often to hear of you more frequently, but I know you are wearied with pen work, and I have so little to write about that would interest you. . . .

The last of the sisters received for a number of years an annuity of £20 from one of the London trade guilds, secured for her through the influence of a London cousin.

Edwards visited her on 23rd December, 1880, and spent that Christmas with her. (At the end of 1876 his wife had died.) The entries in his diary respecting these days which they spent together are so sweet and wholesome that they may well be given in full:—

Had the happiness to find my dear sister fairly well and cheerful. Had a long talk together, and earnest humble prayer together in gratitude of heart for the long desired and now graciously permitted meeting. On Christmas Day prayed, read and conversed with my dear Elizabeth. Then walked of necessity alone, and with very sacred memories, to Lawford. Prayed at the dear grave, which I trust, by God's gracious memory may, long before 1881 be out, if life and health be vouchsafed to me, have its due and loving memorial. . . . In the evening had much reading from Holy Scripture aloud, with Milton's and Keble's hymns, the former from memory. . . . (Two days later), after prayer as usual read to my dear sister, my old London acquaintance Daniel Moore's fine sermon on the "Life to come" (from a vol. which I had given to our beloved mother as long ago as 1848). . . . Left my sister with gratitude for the almost four days which we have been permitted to spend together in peace and love. God be blessed for countless mercies to both of us. At Oxford spent a quiet evening in deep gratitude for a blessed visit and a safe return.

This was probably as peaceful and as happy a time as he had during the rest of his life. He was no stranger all through his life to disappointment and trouble. The common lot of humanity lies very much in that direction, and Edwards had his full share. On New Year's Day of 1881 the sister writes: "I felt dreary after you left, but I have kept myself employed and strive hard against it. The little time we had together, was to me a very happy time, and I shall often think of it with delight and thankfulness. In God's good providence I trust we may meet again at a more genial season." Then there comes a sisterly touch. "Your praise of the pudding and cake made me feel quite proud. I wish you could have taken with you three times as much." Most men are mortal and care for toothsome pudding and cake. He loved trees and all natural things. In the grounds at Mistley the woodman's axe had been at work. She writes some three days after the previous letter: "The existence of the poor trees would be as everlasting as the hills if it were possible, ere you would permit them to be cut down, and rightly too. The park here has been much spoiled by their destruction, and one can scarcely forgive." Numerous are the letters at this time, all breathing an affectionate tone between them. The sister was ailing most of the year, and indeed during a good part of the remainder of her life. She was shown neighbourly kindness by some members of the Congregational Church which she attended, and its ministers, and it is fitting that there should be mentioned Mr. and Mrs. George Fenter, and Mr. and Mrs. John Carter and the daughters of the two families. Two out of these three girls were scholars in the school of the Misses Edwards. In April of the year named Mr. Carter had written to her brother about the sister's state of health. In reply to this, Edwards wrote:—

12 Iffley Road, Oxford, 3rd April, 1881. The note you had the kindness to write to me on Friday, came to my hand last evening. I write of course to my sister, by the post which will bring you this brief acknowledgment of an attention for which I feel greatly indebted

to you, and for which be pleased to accept my cordial thanks. It must be superfluous to say how grateful I shall be if, by God's mercy, you are able by and bye to send me a line to tell of my dear Sister's improvement—a blessing and mercy for which I humbly and heartily pray.

On a later occasion he called at their cottage and thanked them both in grave and dignified terms for all the kindness they had shown to his sister. Elizabeth suffered from attacks of small extravagances, just as did her brother. They are called small extravagances, for the means of neither one nor the other admitted of more, but in both cases they were taxes upon the slender available resources. Elizabeth would send for the doctor on the least occasion. She had a weakness for physic, and while she had some ailments, particularly rheumatism, there were times in the estimation of those who knew her when she did not require medical advice, though she would have it. Unpaid doctors' bills are unmistakably evident. On one occasion Elizabeth was in a neighbour's house. "There goes Dr. —," and she forthwith jumped up and had an interview with him in the cottage where she happened to be at the time. Dear soul! She tried her friends in this way, but to her last days she received a kindness which must have been the very marrow of her life, and she was deeply grateful for the thoughtful care of a few true friends. On 20th December, 1881, she wrote: "My dearly loved brother. Accept my loving thanks for your very kind letter and enclosure. Also for the beautiful book . . . you supply me so well with valuable books. . . . I feel very thankful you bear so calmly and patiently your sad infirmity. In all trials there are alleviations and your eyes continuing so well is a great blessing as you have often said."

It was not until 1882 that he was able to have the long desired monument erected. The inscription reads:—

"Sacred to the memory of Charlotte Edwards, Widow of Anthony Turner Edwards. Born at Hull 17th Aug. 1783, Died at Mistley, 24th Jan. 1864, aet. 81; also of Charlotte Edwards, Daughter of the above named, Born at Writtle 13th June 1814, Died at Manningtree,

22nd Dec. 1864, aet. 51. (On the side nearest the church this is found): They lived, throughout life, together, and in love together, they bore many temporal losses and severe afflictions, in the same year they were laid to their brief rest, beneath. They both died in full assurance of a blissful Reunion through the atoning sacrifice of "Our Blessed Lord Jesus Christ" Mediator, Saviour, Redeemer of sinners. "The Resurrection and the Life Am I: believe and die no more."

Inside Lawford Church there is on the wall which is nearest the monument outside in the graveyard a beautiful white marble tablet, bearing this inscription: "Sacred to the dear and Honour'd Memories of Charlotte Edwards (1783-1864): of Charlotte Edwards (1814-1864): and of Margareta Frances Edwards (1803-1876)". Then follow a text and some lines of poetry. In May, 1882, he was at Manningtree and the two had another refreshing few days together. At the end of that year she writes: "I fear you are suffering much in your health, and it grieves me much to think that I cause you so much anxiety as well as expense. Accept my best and loving thanks for again so generously ministering to my wants. I trust you will never tax your strength another year as you have this. . . . I do not think of my trials as being greater than yours, for I am sure your deprivation of hearing must be great indeed, and it is scarcely ever from my thoughts." In the spring of 1883: ". . . As to yourself you must have some relaxation . . . at your time of life it grieves me, as I have so often said, that you work so hard, and the remuneration so slow in coming. . . . I have scores of your letters which every now and then I read." On 17th July, 1883: "Your most long and sympathising letter my dearest brother made me very grateful to you. I shall never forgive myself for having been the cause of adding to your troubles and anxieties. I would rather have continued suffering. . . . I hope you will believe . . . that I am living as frugally as possible . . . and deny myself many comforts. . . . Many times a day my poor prayers go up for you that Divine strength may be imparted to you, and help and comfort in all times of weakness and depression." He was now dependent on his pension of

eighty pounds a year, and from the tone of the letters it is evident he had expressed deep regret that he could not do more for her. He was too poor to go to Manningtree for the Christmas, and indeed never saw his sister again so far as the available records show. She writes: "I daresay like myself you had a very quiet Christmas. It may be wrong to feel so, but I am always glad when it has passed. It brings sad reflections as this month does. . . . But I trust we can both, humbly yet confidently anticipate a blessed reunion." She had sent him some little things of her own working, and hopes he would wear out many more of them. The tone of the letters during 1884 and the next year is that of deep despondency. The last letter written from Manningtree on 23rd December, 1885, only a few weeks before the death of her brother, may be given in full:—

Manningtree, 23rd December, 1885. My dearly loved Brother, Ever since my last letter to you I have been afraid you might not think it so kind as it ought to have been, therefore I felt I must send you a few lines to assure you I had no intention of giving you pain. Whenever it may be possible to you, I feel assured you will, as in years past, assist me in my pecuniary troubles. It must have seemed to you a most selfish letter, and when I wrote it I was very depressed with one worry after another. I never purchase any Cards, but please accept those I have enclosed. The one entitled "A Benediction" was sent to me by a dear old Lady, and the lines will express my prayer for you. . . . I have been going to tell you, what perhaps you will think rather strange, when feeling low and rather melancholy, I often find solace in reading some of Cowper's *Letters*, I can enter a little into his state of mind, I can remember that even when a child I used at times to feel depressed, and never if I remember rightly, was full of spirit as (I think) children should be. I shall think of you much to-morrow, as you will of me I doubt not in *our* loneliness. I have an invitation to dine with a friend, but it is doubtful whether I shall be well enough to go.

With truest love, ever, my dearest brother, your affectionate sister,  
E. M. Edwards.

The sister lived on, with all her ailments, up to April, 1897, when she died and is buried in Lawford churchyard. To the last she never ceased to speak affectionately of her brother, and often said that sooner or later the

work he had done would be recognised. He had some plans for her to live with him during his sojourn at Niton, but it never became possible for him to carry the wish into effect. Edwards sent numerous books to his sisters as presents. Many of these were from his own collection, and in all cases were written in by himself. Among others there are:—

*Tucker's Memoir of the Life and Episcopate of George Augustus Selwyn, D.D.* In two vols. Inscription, "To my beloved Sister, Elizabeth Margaret Edwards, with the affectionate regards of the giver, and with every loving wish appropriate to the blessed and glorious 'Church Festival' of Easter. 12 Iffley Road, Oxford, Eastertide, 1883." Underneath the two verses which face the dedicatory notice there are lines marking portions of the little poem, and underneath this, by Edwards: "Warriors and also workers of the true type of the Holy Church, as by law established, in England". Other books are: *Tower Church Sermons*, edited by T. Binney, 1852. Inscription, "Charlotte Edwards, from her affec. brother Edward Edwards. Old Trafford, 14th November, 1852."

*The Gospel in Ezekiel*, by Thomas Guthrie, D.D., 1856. Inscription, "To my dearest Mother, with the affectionate and dutiful remembrances of E. E. Manningtree, 29th August, 1856."

*Life of John Coleridge Patteson*, by Charlotte Mary Yonge, 1874. Inscription, "To my dear Sister, with the love and affectionate remembrances of Edward Edwards. Manningtree, 19th October, 1877."

*Catharine and Craufurd Tait*, by the Rev. Wm. Benham, B.D., 1879. Inscription, "For my dear Sister, Elizabeth Margaret Edwards, with brotherly remembrances, and all loving wishes for the New Year, 1880. Oxford."

*Life Mosaic*, by Frances Ridley Havergal, 1880. Inscription, "To my dear Sister, with affectionate remembrances of Years that are gone; and with loving wishes for the New Year now beginning. Edward Edwards. Oxford, New Year's Day, 1881."

*Biographical Memoirs*, by Sir Walter Scott. Two volumes in one. Published 1830. Inscription, "To my dearly loved Sister, Elizabeth Margaret Edwards, with the affectionate wishes, the earnest prayers, and the brotherly love of E. E. Sea View, Niton, Whitsuntide, 1885."

*Selections from the Poems of Robert Southey, LL.D.* Published 1831. Inscription, "To my dearly loved Sister, E. M. E., with gratitude of heart for her graciously vouchsafed measure of improved health, and with truest love and kindest wishes. Niton, Whitsuntide, 1885."

The following is a draft copy in Edwards' writing of a letter to Bullen, dated May, 1866:—

. . . For many years although I have constantly worked most laboriously my income has been precarious in the extreme. In the course of Providence a dearly loved mother and sisters have been in great measure dependent on me, and on their account only, I have spent nearly £700. Of late years this has been during a hard fight not only with poverty but with long illness. How disheartening and depressing such circumstances are in their influence upon that other inevitable fight with the daily pen work, I hope *you* will never know.

Life presents to all many trials and afflictions, but possibly the hardest of all for anybody to bear is that of insufficiency of income to meet expenditure.

## CHAPTER XI.

### LAST YEARS AND DEATH.

Estimate his (Ralegh's) faults and his errors as we may, his life's work was fully done. That life proved itself a nobly productive one.

—*Exmouth and its Neighbourhood.*

THE quaint and beautiful old-fashioned village of Niton is situated a few miles west of Ventnor in the Isle of Wight, and is sheltered by the adjoining Down and cliffs, quite away from the ordinary beat of the tourist. Cottages nestling in rustic beauty are everywhere to be found. Roads wind in and out, and are at times dark from the overhanging foliage, even with the sun overhead. Edwards loved Niton from his first acquaintance with the district as a young man, and to this place he went after the close of his work at Oxford. The quiet and seclusion of the village must have appealed to him. Its rural beauty was a source of delight to him, and the rich masses of foliage abounding everywhere would give some repose to his restless spirit. The St. Catherine's Down and the cliffs afforded a large area for the ceaseless perambulations, which were his chief recreation. The old church of Niton nestles among trees, and roses cover the posts of its gate during their days of bloom. A brook with its rippling waters runs down by the hedge close to the churchyard. The house where he resided is screened by a high hedge of euonymus, which grows everywhere in the Isle of Wight, and hides the house from the road, and there is also a restful grass plot upon which he could look as he sat at work, or gazed from his bedroom. At the back there is nothing but gardens and shingle between the house and the sea. Built round two sides of the house

is a verandah providing shelter from sun and rain. Altogether the village and his place of residence presented a bookman's ideal retreat, but there is no doubt that he suffered at Niton from the lack of access to books. Edwards had snug rooms, and in these he must have felt that, after so much tossing about and unrest of soul, a haven had at last been found where he might spend his days over his beloved library work, and his evenings among his books. If only money matters had cleared up a little, and the needs of his sister had been less pressing, his last years might have been happier. Out of his pension of £80 he had to lodge, keep and dress himself, find money for some printing, and continue his contributions to *Manningtree*. This was not a lavish sum for a man who had some aristocratic notions, and Edwards cherished not a few, and would have thought it sacrilege to curb them one iota. He always dined at five o'clock, habitually dressed for dinner in a velvet waistcoat, and donned a flower in his coat. He wore frilled shirts in these days, quite in the style of an old English gentleman, and had evidently not spared outlay on his personal outfit while in Oxford. While grace was said, or as he said it for himself, he would stand by his chair in a grave and dignified way. He would have done this had the Lord Chancellor in all his robes of office been present, and he would probably have done it had there been but a crust of bread and cheese upon which to dine. These habits were relics of bygone days, when a certain courtly manner was cultivated, and give a clue to a good deal that had passed in his life. Edwards was a rigid upholder of these formalities. The testimony of all who knew him, and can now bear witness to his manners, was that at all times, and under all circumstances, he was a gentleman; an old-fashioned English gentleman, some have said, with a quiet, dignified air, very shy and reserved. He would have made a good nineteenth-century Niccolo de' Niccoli had he possessed the wealth of the Florentine scholar. Edwards talked little of himself, and bore his poverty in secret as long as it was possible

to hide it from those around him, but when it could no longer be concealed, it was with the utmost mental agony that he was driven to make confession.

In the absence of an authentic portrait, the following description of his appearance, as given by those who remembered him, may have some little interest.

He is described by those who knew him at Niton as being above middle size, but neither stout nor slender. His head was bald at the top, and the hair, perfectly white, was bushy round the lower part of the head, and he had long whiskers. He had a florid complexion, and must have had a remarkably strong constitution. He had the scholar's stoop, and always wore a frock coat and a silk hat, with neckties of a blue or green colour. A blue necktie was possibly to harmonise with cold steel-blue eyes. The frock coat and the silk hat ultimately turned very shabby, and became a mark for the fun of the village boys. As one of the boys, now a grown-up man, said to the writer: "I was no better than the rest, and the old man used to scurry away from us as fast as he could. But he always took our fun in a dignified way." During these days at Niton, it is said, he would often sing himself to sleep with the hymn "Abide with me". He lived almost wholly alone. His deafness had increased, and he is still remembered in Niton as a peculiar old man, fond of wandering about the roads, and over the Down by himself. He would walk all alone to many distant places, and during these rambles he talked incessantly to himself. In several of the shops in the village, where he would occasionally go for small purchases, he would joke with those in the shop and make compliments to the ladies.

Edwards felt that he had touched in his zeal for libraries the core of one great public need. He rarely ever spoke of his work. At Niton some were sure that there was distinction attaching to him, but they did not find out what it was during his few years of residence there. As he worked in his sitting-room, which was crowded with his books and papers, he would draw down the blind should

there be any one at work in the garden in front of his window. He could not bear to be observed. For one year there must have been possibly a peacefulness and rest such as he probably had not known for many years. Gaunt poverty did not stalk across his path so nakedly as it did in the later stages. But ultimately his payments for board and lodging with his landlady, although not large, could not be kept up, and when the September quarter of 1883 was reached, she modified the terms, charging but the modest sum of one pound a week. He signalled this event by writing to her the following letter:—

29th Sep. '83. ("S. Michael and all Angels.") It is my wish with your permission to mark "S. Michl' day" with some little humble token of my regard for you—on our entering to-day into a sort of different relation to each other (D.V.). Will you accept this small volume? The book (in a somewhat different sized form) was, for many years, the delight of my dear lost wife—a loss which makes loneliness so sad, and the more sad because stony-hearted people who could a little relieve it, and easily, won't—and her copy of the book, since her death has been my almost daily companion. To many thousands of better people than either of us, it has been an almost priceless consolation in days of sorrow. For you I hope, and pray that many days of comfort and by God's mercy days of health and strength are yet in store. With kindest wishes.

The book mentioned above was the *Christian Year*. The word "loneliness" is underlined twice, and "could" and "won't" italicised. It was during his stay in her house that he was found by Mrs. Dunford, his landlady, pasting in his books a leaflet bearing the printed inscription given below. He hastened to inform her that this bequest was only to take effect after her debt was paid. The leaflet is six inches by four, and printed in two colours. It reads:—

Except the Lord build the House, they labour in vain that build it: except the Lord keep the town, the watchman waketh but in vain. Bequeathed to the Mayor and Corporation of . . . , Isle of Wight, as a very Humble but Most Willingly Offered Nucleus (in anticipation and hope), of their future Free Town Library, to be hereafter (as Testator humbly trusts) supported by a Library Rate, under the "Public

Libraries Acts," 1866, *seqq.*: with the earnest prayers for its speedy foundation, steady growth, and permanent usefulness (D.V.), of Edward Edwards. Sea View, Niton, 188 . . . .

It is singular that there is not one single adoption of the Acts in the Isle of Wight up to the present date.

He was made as happy and as comfortable as possible in his lodgings, but nothing ever seems to have drawn him out of his shell of reserve. Upon one topic he would launch out into invective, and that was when anything called forth an expression of his political convictions. A great question of national importance was then beginning to loom very large on the horizon, and Edwards held very pronounced views upon the subject, and was ever ready to express these opinions. He never forgave the Premier, whom he held responsible, for making his pension but £80 a year. Often was he drawn gently by the arm away when his disputations with other visitors in the house would become troublesome. He became alienated from some of the working men of the village who held different political views from his own. It was balm to a disappointed spirit to thunder forth his likes and dislikes. The time came when he could not pay his bills, and had run several quarters into arrears. Several times he had been told that it would be necessary for him to make room for other guests, but on he remained. The whole of the house had been let for some months, and it became impossible for him to stay longer. He reads in his Bible, Revelation vii., and underlines in red ink verses fourteen, sixteen and seventeen. The words "They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more," touch him, and he dates them 20th July, 1885, 9.30 A.M. It is likely that he had not actually hungered and thirsted up to then, although he had certainly pinched himself. The outlook was unpromising. On that same day the Rev. John Harrison, then the Baptist minister in Niton, met him near the manse gate, looking very wearied and distressed. He scarcely knew Edwards, but stopped him and asked if he could be of service to him. Then came a pathetic

story that he had nowhere to lay his head, and it was already eventide, and pleaded to be taken in, or shelter found for him. Niton is only a small place, and lodgings could not be had for him, and Mr. and Mrs. Harrison arranged to take him into their house until the end of the season. A cosy bed sitting-room was prepared for him, and everything was done to minister to his comfort that could be done. The manse stands raised above the road, and a high hedge hides the lower part of the house from the road. He loved its seclusion and revelled in its garden. It was here that Mrs. Harrison wrote her book *Mackay of Uganda*, a worthy record of her brother's pioneer work in that new British territory. One evening in the third week in August, says this good lady, "I was in the drawing-room and had my infant in my arms. Mr. Edwards came in from the garden and saw us, as he passed the door on his way to supper in the dining-room. The old man looked astonished and then came forward and spoke to me. Then he knelt down on one knee and blessed the child in quite a patriarchal way, that he might become a great man and be an influence for good in the world."

Why Edwards did not make known the extreme poverty from which he suffered, and which clouded his last days, is hard to understand. There was one relative at least who would have helped him gladly. But while letters passed between them, none ever gave the least indication of the straits in which he lived at Niton. To no one does he appear to have appealed. A little would have sufficed to lift him out of his slough of despair. The merest few pounds which a stockbroker can make in as many minutes would have paid all his debts and lightened his heart. But, too proud to make his needs known, either to relative or the charitable, he wore out his hope, till despair laid its icy grasp upon his soul. These were dark days for him. Possibly a hundred pounds would have paid every one of his debts, and left a small fund in hand. Whatever may be the number of those able and willing to help the deserving, it is impossible for them to go about with open

purse in hand to grant the necessary succour. Everybody knows what would be the ultimate result of such indiscriminate charity. But here the reader is face to face with Edwards' circumstances. A sister needing monetary help, and receiving it to the last of his days, and to the utmost of his means, often to his own impoverishment. A liberal expenditure in printing and postages. And to these must be added the considerable sum for which he was in debt to his landlady, and some other small debts. Some few subscriptions were paid him in advance for the second edition of *Memoirs of Libraries*. There is trace of four cases where he, in his poverty, asked for prepayment. In two of these instances the friend to whom he wrote paid for several copies. The people at Niton knew of his pension, and naturally asked why he could not maintain himself upon the sum granted. They knew nothing of his contributions to his sister. Even his landlady was not told. Of the liabilities for printing she knew nothing. The old man's joy at the prospect of setting everything right when his book was out was like the joy of a child anticipating the gift of a marvellous toy. But this hope was to be dashed away from him. Nature is as pitiless as iron in her methods. She spares not any one, and the weak and the sensitive suffer most from the blast of her storms. Darkness at last drew around this troubled old man, battered and worn in life's fierce struggle, and he was beginning to see the hopelessness of an impossible future before him. He had reached absolutely the end of his resources, and all avenues seemed closed to him for such help as his great pride would enable him to accept. Life had become a burden, hope, that stay of the heart and soul, had flown, and even that sweet consolation which aforesometimes he derived from Keble's *Christian Year* had now lost some of its power. Despair had enveloped him like a mighty fog, and he saw no turning, and no escape. Thus have others of the world's benefactors gone to their rest. Nature claims their work as her own, and the worker must take his

chance in the storm and stress of life. The long story of the world's truest and best men and women is naught but a record of broken hearts, disappointed hopes, and an eternal battling with the rude shocks of life.

This busy life of ours is full of such martyrs to the commonweal, and every hermit spirit will go out to Edwards in his terrible loneliness, torn to pieces with the thought that he had been neglected, and that the world had not dealt kindly with him. The fate of nearly all true souls who carry the burdens of humanity on their hearts is that their personality becomes absolutely merged in their work. No true labourer in the great field of public usefulness wishes it otherwise.

In a letter to the present writer received from the Rev. G. W. Jeudwine, M.A., Rector of Niton at the time, under date of 21st June, 1901, he says: "Edwards was very shy and avoided society at Niton, and I had little intercourse with him. I had known him before when he was engaged in rearranging the library at Queen's College, Oxford. I understood that he was engaged in some literary work which was to be a *magnum opus*, but was long in coming off, and that disappointment about this preyed upon his mind. . . ." Out of the furnace comes the pure gold. Mother earth hides her methods and secrets. The diamond sparkles as it is worn, but there is still ignorance of how it is formed. All the strivings under the sun will not alter Nature's methods. Humanity has to bow to the yoke and yield without question to her relentless forces. That is pretty theory where it does not touch the individual, but the individual whom the experience has touched on a raw place, is often none the worse if he can manage to scramble through into a place of safety.

A crisis in the life of this anchorite has now to be chronicled, which is full of pathetic interest, though pitiful in the extreme. His monetary troubles, the weakness of old age, acute disappointment at the tardy fruition of his labours on his book and other depressing circumstances all tended to encourage counsels of despair, and it is

probable that with these promptings he took the step which nearly resulted in a tragedy.

The days and nights were getting cold, and he had a fire constantly in his room, which he kept so closely that there was some difficulty in getting him out of it when it had to be tidied. One day early in November, 1885, Edwards said to Mr. and Mrs. Harrison "I am going to Freshwater and may not be back for several days". Nothing was thought of this at the time, as he had often gone away on the top of one of the coaches, and remained away a few days. For some days afterwards nothing more was heard of him, till word was brought that he had been found in a perishing condition on St. Catherine's Down, and was being brought home in a cart. By-and-by the cart drew near, and in it, covered with clean straw to screen him from the curious eyes of the children on their way to school, was Edward Edwards, utterly broken down, with eyes looking wild and streaming with tears, but conscious of all that was going on around him. They lifted him out as gently as if he had been a monarch, dressed in purple and fine linen, and put him to bed at once. There he lay for a full fortnight, nursed with the tenderest care, fed and tended like a child, and during night and day his nurses had to apply all necessary remedies to restore animation to his almost frozen limbs. Edward Edwards had been found in what is known as the Round Tower on the Down. He had been out on the Down without food for three nights and days in inclement weather, and a bitterly cold winter was that of 1885-6. The Round Tower is roofless, and in it he was found, lying on the ground, by a shepherd who was taking provender for the sheep. His hands were stained with dirt, and he had manifestly gripped the earth in an agony of spirit, while crying for death to come and release him from his misery and troubles. During the night the sheep on the Down make for the Round Tower for shelter, and Edwards had been kept warm by them, as his clothes showed. They had evidently kept him warm enough to preserve his life.

He must have suffered much during that time of exposure, and he was brought back more dead than alive. His hands and feet were in a terrible condition with the frost, and two of his fingers were gashed to the bone. He got over this awful exposure much better than was expected. During this time he was as docile as a child ; and was by-and-by able to get up again and resume his work. "As I saw you and your wife and children I felt that I could not live, and paced the Down and slept under the stars," was nearly all that he said of this sad experience. A bill for a comparatively few pounds had become due on the day he went to the Down, and this he could not meet. The absorbing needs of a very young family made it necessary to form some plan with regard to their lodger, and Mr. Harrison arranged with Mrs. Wheeler of St. Catherine's Lodge, almost immediately opposite the manse, to take the old man in and board and lodge him. For the expense the kindly Baptist minister and his wife undertook to be responsible.

For two weeks Edwards was in Mrs. Wheeler's house, attended to and cared for as an honoured guest by herself and companion, Miss Drayson. During most of that fortnight Edwards worked in his sitting-room, and his table was constantly covered with papers.

On the Saturday night, 6th February, Edwards had a simple dinner at five o'clock, and Dr. Holman, his medical attendant (now deceased), called during the progress of the meal. "I cannot see him," said Edwards. "He should call upon a gentleman at a time when he is not dining," and he would not see the doctor. He complained of his feet hurting him, and about nine o'clock on that Saturday night his landlady brought basin and towels, and bathed his feet, and as she left the room he stood up by his arm-chair, which was near the fire, and with a gratitude in his eyes which is remembered to-day, said, "I am much obliged to you—very". These were his last words spoken to any one. He went almost immediately to his bedroom. On the Sunday morning about half-past

seven his hot water was taken up to his room. He did not answer the knock, but was distinctly heard to cough. When nine o'clock came, and he had not come downstairs, the two women began to be concerned. Mrs. Wheeler went into the room, and Edward Edwards was found lying on his back quite dead, with his hands folded across his breast, and the placid calm of death on his face.

He was almost penniless, and the kindness of a few neighbours provided him with decent burial. Rumours spread in the village that Edwards had taken poison, but of this there is not one shred of evidence. During his exposure on the Down or afterwards, there was not, says Mr. Harrison, one jot of evidence that Edwards had attempted self-destruction. Edwards' own words, already given, show his state of mind. He wished to lie down and die. In order to aid in clearing up these misconceptions Mr. Harrison referred to Edwards' death in a sermon, and preached from the text "A broken and a contrite heart, O God, Thou wilt not despise". There is no doubt that the intense cold, at the time of the exposure, had affected Edwards' heart, and the registrar's entry of death gives debility and atrophy of heart as the cause of death.

On 10th February, 1886, Edward Edwards was buried in the churchyard of Niton. The three ladies previously named, Dr. Hemsted and his sister (relatives on the wife's side), and the late Dr. Jolliffe were present at the funeral. Mr. Harrison had taken cold in looking after Edwards' affairs, and was not able to be present. Dr. Jolliffe was a retired naval medical man, and had a kindly regard for Edwards. A few obituary notices appeared in literary and other journals at the time, but beyond this no special notice was taken of his death, and the grave remained unmarked from 1886 till 1902, when a granite monument was erected. This was inaugurated on the 7th of February, 1902, the sixteenth anniversary after his death, in the presence of a number of librarians and many villagers. The inscription on the monument is as follows:—

"Cinis non finis" (on the Urn). In Memory of Edward Edwards. Born in London Dec. 14, 1812. Died at Niton Feb. 7, 1886. Man of Letters and Founder (with William Ewart and Joseph Brotherton) of Municipal Public Libraries. This Monument has been placed over his grave in recognition of his work on behalf of Public Libraries by Thomas Greenwood. Inaugurated on Feb. 7, 1902, by Richard Garnett, Charles W. Sutton, William E. A. Axon, John J. Ogle.

Thus ends the life-record of one who grudged neither labour, time, nor self-sacrifice on behalf of an educational movement, which he helped to inaugurate, and, by his splendid talents, energy and knowledge, carried to a triumphant conclusion. It has been interesting to survey his long life, from the days of his fiery enthusiasm in the cause of public libraries, to those of his pathetic old age, when, in spite of crushing difficulties, he still laboured at his beloved cause, as long as he could use a pen. While all kinds of minor lights have come before the public view as benefactors, deserving of applause for their work on behalf of libraries and librarianship, Edwards, who towered above everybody in the magnitude of his contributions to the cause, has not received the recognition which was his just due. A considerable amount of this seeming neglect was doubtless due to the general ignorance of Edwards' whereabouts and personality, which was owing partly to his own retiring disposition and the public belief, which had become fixed, that Mr. Ewart was the sole father of the library movement. Again, up to 1886 only about 130 towns had adopted the Libraries Acts, and of these a considerable number had not been organised, so that there was not a very large constituency likely to be interested in the public library movement. Indeed, the subscription, university and professional libraries looked down in those days upon the municipal library with no very kindly feeling, and, till the public library movement grew in strength and influence, there were very few who had any sympathy for, or interest in, Edward Edwards as a pioneer of this important work. There is no doubt that he received a good deal of encouragement and kindness

from librarians of all kinds while he was at work on the new edition of his *Memoirs*, but as no one knew of the straits to which he had been reduced, the apparent apathy on this head is pardonable. Viewed as a man he was not a success, and his career is a striking example of how persistently a man may stand in the path of his own advancement. His efforts on behalf of libraries will bear fruit through countless years to come, and generations of readers unborn will have cause to bless his name.

## APPENDICES.

CHRONOLOGICAL NOTE of Edward Edwards' chief Labours and Writings on the History, Organisation, Diffusion and Improvement, of Libraries, Public and Private and other subjects. Many of these entries are given as Edwards recorded them in his several prospectuses of his *Memoirs of Libraries*. In these cases the items have been given as he left them.

1836. *A Letter to Mr. Hawes, M.P.* (afterwards Sir Benjamin Hawes, Under-Secretary for the Colonies), *on the Management and Affairs of the British Museum.* Second edition. Niton, January, 1839. Originally printed in 1836. 8vo.

„ *Remarks on the Ministerial Plan of a Central University Examining Board.* 8vo.

„ June. Evidence respecting Deficiencies in British Museum Library, and respecting desired improvements in its Catalogues; given before the Select Committee above named, upon its reappointment in Session of 1836. Printed in App. to the Committee's Report.

„ *The Great Seals of England.* Engraved by the process of Achille Collas. With a Preface, Historical and Juridical. 1836. Fol.

1837. *New South Wales: its State and Prospects.* [Written in conjunction with the late James Macarthur, of Camden, N.S.W.] 1837. 8vo.

„ *The Napoleon Medals.* With 40 Plates, engraved by the process of Achille Collas. 1837. Fol.

„ *A Descriptive Catalogue of the Medals of France, contained in the "Medal Room" of the British Museum, with the deficiencies noted.* Margate, Nov., 1837. 8vo.

1839. Feb. to April. Preparation (under direction of the late Sir A. Panizzi, and in conjunction with the late J. Winter Jones, Thomas Watts, and J. Humffreys Parry) of the "Rules of Compilation" for an *Alphabetical Catalogue of the Printed Books in the British Museum.* Printed by J. B. Nichols & Son. Lond., 1841. Fol.

„ *Letter to Sir Martin Archer Shee, on the Reform of the Royal Academy*, pp. 44.

1840. Revision of the press of the Article "Academies," and of other, but minor, Articles in the Catalogue above named.

,, *The Fine Arts in England, their state and prospects considered relatively to National Education.* Willesden, 1840. 8vo.

1841-1844. A complete "Catalogue of the Thomason Collection of Civil War Tracts (*King's Pamphlets*) in the British Museum". —MS. This catalogue embraces more than 54,000 separate titles and references. It has not been printed separately, but all the articles are incorporated in the General Printed Catalogue of the Library.

1843. *A Letter on the Present Position of the Question of National Education.* 1843. 8vo.

1845. Feb. 28 to Oct. 15. Continuation of the Class "Theology" in the late Wm. Thomas Lowndes' *British Librarian* (after that Author's decease). 8vo. Lond.: Edw. Lumley. 1847.

1847. Feb. "Public Libraries in London and Paris"; in *British Quarterly Review*, vol. vi., pp. 72-114. 8vo. Lond., Aug., 1847.

,, Aug. "Statistical View of Public Libraries"; Europe and America; read to the Statistical Society of London, March 20th, 1848; printed in its *Journal*. 8vo. Lond., Aug., 1848.

,, Sept. Reprint of the above (with some additions; including suggestions for building within the British Museum Quadrangle, in order to an extension of the Library). 8vo. Lond.: Savill & Edwards. For private circulation.

,, *Letter to the Rev. Thomas Binney on the Present Position of the Education Question.*

1848. *Statistical View of Public Libraries.* Second edition: in *Naumann's Serapeum*. 8vo. Leipsic.

,, April 10. *A Letter to the Earl of Ellesmere on the Paucity of Libraries freely open to the Public in the British Empire.* 8vo. Lond. For private circulation.

,, Oct. 9. Circular Letter to the Librarians of England and Wales for additional information, in view of an intended Select Committee of the House of Commons, "on Public Libraries," to be moved for in the following Session (1849).

1849, Feb. 13 and 23. Evidence (on British Museum Catalogues, and on the nature, extent and value of the great Collection of *King's Pamphlets*, presented by George III.) given before the Royal Commission (Earl of Ellesmere's) on the British Museum.

,, April 19 and 24; and June 5 following. Evidence on the great need of "Free Town Libraries" in England, given before the Select Committee, of which the late William Ewart, M.P. for Dumfries (formerly for Liverpool), was Chairman.

1849, June 25. "A Letter to William Ewart, M.P., on the Importance of Printing and Publishing the Catalogues of Public Libraries." Printed in *Appendix to Report of Select Committee on Public Libraries*. Fol.

„ Aug. *Statistical View of Public Libraries in Europe and America*. Third edition with large additions. Fol. London: Hansard.

1850, Feb. "Libraries, and the People." In *British Quarterly Review*, vol. xi., pp. 61-80. 8vo. Lond.: Savill & Edwards.

„ March 7, 11 and 21. Further Evidence (on Defective Provision of Public Libraries, freely accessible in the British Empire) before Select Committee on Public Libraries. Session II.

„ Sept. Report (written in conjunction with Mr. John Plant) to Edward Ryley Langworthy, Mayor of Salford (afterwards M.P. for that Borough), on the means of improving the Free Library at the Peel Park in Salford.—MS.

„ October and November. Catalogue of the Parochial Library at Whitechurch, Hants, founded by Dr. Bray's Trustees.—MS.

„ *Public Libraries in Europe and in America*. With Remarks on the Comparative Budgets of France, and of Britain, respectively, so far as relates to the public support of Schools, Museums, and Libraries, in the financial year 1849-1850, and in several previous years; and also with a lithographed diagram, exhibiting, approximately, the extent of the National provision of Public Libraries, in the several States of Europe; together with Plans of the chief Capital Cities, showing the respective Sites of the Libraries accessible to the Public. Third edition. 1850. The first edition was printed in London, 1847. The second edition at Leipsic, 1850. Fol.

1851. *Draft Lists of Books*. Suggested for the Manchester Free Library. March, 1851. 4to.

„ Jan., to 1852, August. Formation and Organisation of the first "Free Library" in Britain, founded under "Ewart's Act" by a municipal rate.

1852, August 14. "An Address to the Burgesses of Manchester" (on the Adoption of the Library Rate). (Drawn up and circulated to the extent of 10,000 copies, by the desire and at the cost of the late Sir John Potter, afterwards M.P. for that city.)

1853, March 3. Evidence on the working of the Public Libraries Act, and on the claim of Free Town Libraries to the receipt, gratuitously, of all Publications printed at the public charge (whether for Parliament, or for Government Departments): given before the "Select Committee of the House of Commons (Mr. Tufnell's) on Distribution of Parliamentary

Papers". Printed in *Appendix to Committee's Report*, pp. 64-89. Fol.

1853, Oct. 6. *First Annual Report to the Council of the City of Manchester on the working of its Free Public Libraries.* 8vo. Manchester: Cave & Sever.

„ Oct. 6. *Three Reports on the Formation, Arrangement, and first year's working of the Manchester Free Libraries. With Suggestions for the Improvement of the "Public Libraries Act".* 8vo. Manchester: Cave & Sever.

1854, March. "Humphrey Chetham, and his Library at Manchester"; in the *New York Literary Gazette* (July and Sept.).

„ Oct. 19. *Second Annual Report to the City Council of Manchester.* (As above.)

1855, Jan. Report to the Committee of the St. Helens (Lancashire) Free Library, on the Formation of their Collections for Reference and for Lending; with copious Book-lists subjoined.—MS.

„ Aug. 4. *Special Report to the City Council of Manchester on a Classed Catalogue for their City Library.* Fol. Manchester: Cave & Sever. For private circulation.

„ Aug. 10. *Manchester Worthies and their Foundations.* (§ I. Thomas La Warre, and the Old Church; § II. Hugh Oldham, and his Grammar-school; § III. Humphrey Chetham, and his Library; § IV. William Hulme, and his Exhibitions at Brasenose College, Oxford.) 8vo. Manchester: James Galt & Co.

„ Sept. *Third Annual Report.* (As above.) 8vo. Manchester: Cave & Sever.

„ Oct. 8. *A Comparative Table of the Principal Schemes which have been proposed for the Classification of Human Knowledge . . . with reference especially to the Arrangement and Cataloguing of Libraries.* Fol. Manchester: Charles Simms. Printed for private circulation.

1856, Oct. 31. *Fourth Annual Report.* (As above.)

„ Nov. Catalogue of the ancient Library at Compton-Verney, Warwickshire, belonging to the Right Hon. the Lord Willoughby de Broke.—MS.

„ Dec. 24. *A Letter to Sir John Potter on the proposed Catalogue of the "Free Library" of Manchester, and on the lately printed Catalogue of the "Portico Library" in that City.* With Specimens. Fol. Manchester: John Harrison & Son. For private circulation.

1857, March 11. "Notes on the Classification of Human Knowledge"; read to the Historic Society of Lancashire and Cheshire, and printed in their *Transactions*, vol. x., pp. 61-96. 8vo. Liverpool: T. Brakell.

1857, June. Articles: "Libraries," in the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, vol. xiii., pp. 373-434. Eighth edition. 4to. Edinburgh: A. & C. Black. (Two articles: I. Libraries (Formation and Classification of); II. Libraries (History of), founded on an article in the previous and seventh edition (1836) of that *Encyclopædia*, written by the late James Brown, LL.D., Advocate; but almost entirely by me rewritten in 1857.)

1858, Jan. 30. *Fifth Annual Report*. (As above.)

" Dec. Report to Sir Francis Crossley, Bart., M.P., on the proposed Formation of a "Workpeople's Library" at Deane-Clough Mills, Halifax, Yorkshire.—MS.

1859. *Memoirs of Libraries: Including a Handbook of Library Economy*. 1859. 2 vols. 8vo. With 8 steel plates; 36 woodcuts; 16 lithographic plates; and 4 illustrations in chromo-lithography. 48s.

1860, July 10, to 1863, Sept. 25. Catalogue of the Library of the Right Hon. Thomas Augustus Wolstenholme Parker, sixth Earl of Macclesfield, at Shirburn Castle, Oxon. 6 vols. Folio.—MS. With printed Titles, printed Preface and printed Synoptical Groupings of the Contents. Lond.: J. E. Adlard. 1862-3.

" Sept. Articles on "Newspapers," "Police," "Post Office," "Savings Bank," "Tea and the Tea Trade," "Trade Museums," "Woollen and Worsted Manufacture"—in the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, vols. xvi., xviii. and xxi. 4to. Edinb.: A. & C. Black.

" Paper on Libraries contributed to the Social Science Congress at Glasgow.

1864, February. Report to His Grace the Duke of Marlborough, K.G., on a proposed rearrangement and re-cataloguing of the "Sunderland Library" then at Blenheim; and on the classification of the "Marlborough MSS." and "Sunderland MSS.," still preserved at Blenheim.—MS.

" *Chapters of the History of the French Academy*, etc. 8vo. 6s.

" *Libraries and Founders of Libraries*. 8vo. 18s.

1865, Dec. 14. *Synoptical Tables of the Public Records of the Realm. With a Historical Preface*. Fol. Lond.: J. E. Adlard.

1866. *Liber Monasterii de Hyda; comprising a Chronicle of the Affairs of England from the Settlement of the Saxons to Kanute: and a Chartulary; A.D. 455-1023*. Edited by the Authority of the Lords Commissioners of Her Majesty's Treasury, under the Direction of the Master of the Rolls. 8vo. 10s. 6d.

1867. Commons, parks and open spaces near London: their history . . . 1867 (still in MS.) in the Guildhall Library.

1868. *Diocesan Registries and Historical Searchers; A Correspond-*

dence with the Right Rev. the Lord Bishop of Salisbury ; with his Lordship's Registrar and with the Registrar of the Chapter. 24 pages. 8vo. Lond.: Clay, Son & Co.

1868. *The Life of Sir Walter Raleigh* ; based on Contemporary Documents preserved in the Rolls House, the Privy Council Office, Hatfield House, the British Museum and other Manuscript Repositories, British and Foreign. Together with his Letters, now first collected (and chiefly from the Marquess of Salisbury's Library at Hatfield). 2 vols. 8vo. With Portrait from Lord Bath's Collection: engraved by Jeens. 32s.

,, *Exmouth and its Neighbourhood, Ancient and Modern* ; being Notices, Historical, Biographical and Descriptive, of a Corner of South Devon. [Anonymous.] Printed at Exmouth, 1868. Crown 8vo. 5s.

1869. *Free Town Libraries, their Formation, Management and History, in Britain, France, Germany and America* ; Together with Brief Notices of some Famous Book Collectors and of the respective places of deposit—especially when in Town Libraries (ancient or modern)—of their surviving Collections. 1869. 8vo. 21s.

,, July, August. Calendar of part of the Trevor (Diplomatic) MSS. preserved at Hampden House, Bucks.—MS.

1870. March. *A Catalogue of the Free Library of the Borough of Doncaster*. 8vo. Leeds: J. Y. Knight & Co. 1870.

,, June 27, to 1876, April. A Classified Catalogue of the Library of Queen's College, Oxford. (I. Theology; II. History, Philosophy and Literature of Ancient Greece; III. Do. of Ancient Rome; IV. Latin Literature of the Revival; V. History, Philosophy and Literature of Modern Continental Europe; VI. Do. of the United Kingdom; VII. Political Economy and Sociology; VIII. Arts and Sciences; IX. Polygraphic Collections.)—MS.

,, *Lives of the Founders of the British Museum* ; (viz.: Sir Robert (Bruce) Cotton; Henry Stuart Prince of Wales; Thomas Howard, Earl of Arundel, K.G.; Robert Harley, Earl of Oxford and Mortimer, K.G.; William Courten (the Fleming); and Sir Hans Sloane, Bart., M.D., President of the Royal Society.) With Notices of its chief Augmentors, etc. 1570 to 1870. 2 vols. 1870. 8vo. 36s. A few large paper copies at £4 4s.

1872, March 6. A Report to the Ven. the Provost of Queen's College, Oxford, on a plan of printing the catalogue, whilst in progress. With printed examples and specimens of the Catalogue proposed.

,, Lithographic Diagrams, showing the new and classified arrangements of the College Libraries (upper and lower). (With

printed Tables of the Classification which I had adopted upon an entirely novel plan.)

1873. A Scheme of the Classification adopted in the Rearrangement of the Library of Queen's College, Oxford (1870 to 1876). With printed Specimens of the Catalogue in the form submitted and recommended to the Ven. the Provost (the late Archdeacon Jackson, D.D.). Oxford, 1873. Privately printed.

1874, January 10. Second Report to the Ven. the Provost of Queen's College, Oxford, on the progress of the new Catalogue; and on the plan of classification and shelf arrangement pursued in reorganising the Library.

1877, May. Report to the Curators of the Bodleian Library, Oxford, on a proposed Calendar of the "Carte Manuscripts," belonging to the University (and comprising: I. The Correspondence, political collections and State Papers of the two Dukes of Ormond, successively Lords Lieutenants of Ireland; II. Correspondence, State Papers and political collections of the family of Hastings (Earls of Huntingdon); III. Correspondence, State Papers and political collections of the family of Wharton (Lords Wharton; Earls and Dukes of Wharton); IV. Correspondence and political and juridical papers of Sir John Davys (Attorney-General in Ireland, and author of *Nosce Te ipsum*); V. Correspondence and State Papers of Sir William Fitzwilliam (Ancestor of the Lords Fitzwilliam), Lord Deputy of Ireland in the reign of Queen Elizabeth; VI. Collections of State Papers, relating as well to the history of the British Empire, as to the history of France and of Spain, made in France by Thomas Carte (the historian), early in the eighteenth century; VII. Literary Correspondence and Literary and Miscellaneous Papers of (a) Samuel Carte, M.A., Vicar of Clifton, Warwickshire, and Master of the Free School in Leicester; of (b) Samuel Carte, jun., LL.B., of Symond's Inn, a distinguished antiquary; of (c) John Carte, LL.B., Vicar of Tachbroke, Warwickshire, etc.; and of (d) Thomas Carte, the historian.)

.., May, to 1880, February. A Chronological Catalogue of the historical, economical and political collections of books and tracts in the Library of Corpus Christi College, Oxford. (Arranged as to the archaic and historical works, and where practicable in the order of time, of the latest of the events narrated in each of them respectively, and as to the politico-economic works in the order of time of their composition respectively; or, if that be undiscoverable according to the dates of *first* publication.)—MS.

June, to 1882, August. A Calendar of the Carte Manuscripts (above named), contained in the Bodleian Library (Latin,

English, French, Spanish, Italian and German; from the eleventh to the eighteenth century); arranged chronologically.

1881, February 5. Report to the Curators of the Bodleian Library, on the progress of the above-named Calendar of Carte MSS., and more especially on that portion of it which contains the *Ormond Papers* (cir. 1638 to cir. 1710), relating to the History and especially to the great Land Settlement (1660-66) of Ireland.

1884. *Letters of a Hampshire Conservative* (*loyal to Church and Queen*), addressed to the Editor of the *Isle of Wight Advertiser*, on certain points of the "London Government (rather 'Mis-Government') Bill". Niton, May and June, 1884. Printed for private circulation only, in its separate shape. Nos. 1 to 4. 8vo.

,, "Researches for Manuscripts in the Levant, and more especially in the Monasteries of Mount Athos":—Giovanni Aurispa to Spyridion Lambros (A.D. 1425 to 1880). Printed in *The Library Chronicle* for May, June and July, 1884, vol. i., Nos. 3, 4 and 5. Royal 8vo.

1884-5. Articles in ninth edition *Encyclopædia Britannica*, "Newspapers," "Post Office".

1885. *Handbook to the Literature of General Biography*. Written in conjunction with the Rev. Charles Hole, B.A., with introduction by Edwards. The first part only issued.

,, *Memoirs of Libraries of Museums; and of Archives*; (public and private), and of some of their chief founders, collectors, keepers, and benefactors. Second edition, revised, continued to 1885, and (in great part) re-written. Vol. i. only printed, and this left incomplete.

ADDRESSES DELIVERED AT THE INAUGURATION OF  
THE "EDWARD EDWARDS" MEMORIAL.

ADDRESS BY DR. RICHARD GARNETT, C.B.

AT the instance of one among ourselves we are met to-day to enjoy a pleasure long deferred, and to fulfil a duty long delayed. The gratification with which we find ourselves here is inseparable from the consciousness that we are well and honourably employed. Of this, therefore, I need say nothing: but, rather for the sake of those at a distance whom these words may reach than of ourselves to whom I can state little that is not already well known, I comply with the invitation which I have received to say a few words.

"Honour to whom honour." This is an important precept whether regarded in the abstract or in its practical influence upon mankind. In the abstract, the due reward of desert is an injunction of natural justice. Practically, the same law, sometimes apparently evaded, but in the long run infallible, which ordains that where there is no work there shall be no pay, equally prescribes that where there is no pay there shall be no work. It is only by honouring the benefactors of humanity, especially when circumstances have deprived them of material recompense, that society insures that the stream of benefaction shall be kept up. This is a duty not always ill performed. When we think of the great movements and beneficent inventions which have done so much for our country during the last century, we find that they generally occur to our minds in connection with some one eminent man. We associate Stephenson with railways, Wheatstone with telegraphs, Darwin with natural history, Wakefield with colonisation, Rowland Hill with cheap postage, Cobden with free trade. In the majority of cases, these distinguished men and others like them would feel themselves sufficiently rewarded by the success of their inventions or ideas, and the connexion of their names with these, even did no substantial advantage to themselves ensue. But hard is the fate of the benefactor of mankind who reaps neither profit during his life nor honour after his death. If this were the general rule benefactions would cease, and mankind at large would be the chief sufferers. It is, therefore, useful to the community, as well as gratifying to individual feeling, to seek out instances of such unintentional injustice or negligence, and to endeavour to repair them. In a certain measure, unjust

neglect has been the lot of him whom we are now assembled to honour, and it is the consciousness of this that brings us here.

If we cast our eyes over Great Britain at present, we behold it covered with free libraries, the property of the various municipalities, supported by funds derived from all classes of the community, open impartially to all these classes, filled with books available for use either in the building or at the homes of the ratepayers, ably organised, efficiently officered, and, with whatever drawbacks, in the main vehicles of invaluable knowledge, inspiring ideas, and healthy mental recreation. Fifty years ago, there was hardly one. Whence the change? Doubtless, if one looks to the very bottom of things, to the community's conviction of its necessity. But who awoke that conviction? Ideas must incarnate themselves in persons, or they remain ineffectual. I do not for a moment overlook the fact that the Free Library movement, important as it was, was but a minor feature of that great general movement for the elevation of the people by means of education which had been progressing in one shape or another ever since Robert Raikes established Sunday Schools, and which had been aided from various motives, sometimes consciously, sometimes unconsciously, by men of the most dissimilar character and of the most dissimilar classes. Doubtless most of these men would have agreed that the wide dissemination of books was a good thing, and important steps had already been taken to promote it by the diffusion of cheap publications by the Useful Knowledge Society, and the well-selected libraries of mechanics' institutes. But these were private undertakings, and although we might probably find expressions of opinion that the matter was one for the community at large, I hardly think that we shall find any systematic attempt to bring this principle into practical operation until between 1840 and 1850, when it is brought forward and, with a rapidity most unusual in the case of great reforms, realised under the guidance of two Lancashire members of the House of Commons, William Ewart and Joseph Brotherton, whose participation in this great work we record this day, and of him whom we are more especially met to honour, Edward Edwards.

The circumstances which made Mr. Edwards, in an especial degree, the apostle of Free Libraries, and the history of his life in general, are well known to us here, and will become known to the public upon the publication of the comprehensive memoir of him prepared by Mr. Greenwood, which is already in the press. I need not, therefore, dwell upon these circumstances at any length. I may claim for the British Museum the credit of first directing his attention to the subject, not, however, by its excellences, but by its deficiencies. The particulars of Edwards' early education are obscure, but we find him in London at the age of twenty-three with a considerable amount of knowledge and an ambition to make himself useful to his fellow-men in some department of literature, art, or politics. He naturally

resorted to the library of the British Museum as the chief repertory and arsenal of knowledge, and found it in that pre-Panizzian era lamentably behind the times. The accidental coincidence of the appointment of a committee of inquiry into the general administration of the Museum gave him the opportunity of stating his views both as a witness and as the author of a pamphlet. This procured him the notice of many eminent public men, gave his mind that bent towards library matters which it otherwise would not have received, and induced him to seek an appointment in the library of the British Museum. This engagement proved, indeed, satisfactory neither to him nor to the Institution, but its very failure proved instrumental in directing him to a wider field of usefulness. Finding himself, from whatever cause, disqualified from taking a conspicuous place at the Museum, he, as Emerson says of the man whom social defects throw upon himself for companionship, and who profits by meditation and introspection, "mended his shell with pearl". He took up the question of libraries generally, and especially devoted himself to showing how lamentably, in respect of facilities provided by libraries for the education of the bulk of the people, England was behind most continental countries. If in preparing his statistics he was guilty of many errata, this is comparatively immaterial, the one unpardonable erratum would have been to have left the matter alone. He was fortunate in exciting the attention and gaining the sympathy of one of the most useful members that ever sat in Parliament, William Ewart, then representing a Scotch constituency, but a Liverpool man and formerly member for Liverpool, whom, along with Joseph Brotherton, member for Salford, we are also honouring to-day. Mr. Ewart procured the committee on public libraries which prepared the way for the Free Public Libraries Act of 1850, which he drew up, introduced, and actually got passed into law the same session, an achievement which in these days I fear we should think almost incredible for a private member. Edwards appears as the leading and moving spirit, alike in the proceedings of the committee and in its copious appendixes. It is as much his epic as the report of the British Museum Commission of 1848-50 is Panizzi's.

I think that we are fully justified in awarding to Edwards the leading part in the inauguration of that Free Library movement in which we are all so deeply interested, which has accomplished so much for the country already, and which is destined to accomplish so much more. But it is not to be inferred that his coadjutors were ciphers. In my connexion with public business I have occasionally been reminded of a circus procession I once chanced to see entering a provincial town. The Queen of Beauty towered enthroned upon a car drawn to all appearance by two elephants, two buffaloes and two dromedaries. But the six stately quadrupeds were in reality drawing nothing; all the work was in fact being done by a little, quiet, patient,

insignificant horse in the shafts. Many an august body is thus conducted, but such was not the case with the undertakings in which Mr. William Ewart interested himself. His correspondence with Edwards, of which Mr. Greenwood's memoir affords examples, shows conclusively his ardent interest, his unflagging industry, and his responsibility for every detail. When we turn to Mr. Ewart's own biography we must feel astonishment at the amount and importance of the useful work performed by him. What he did for the advancement of knowledge in 1850 he had already done for the advancement of art in 1836, when a report drafted by him led to the establishment of schools of design. Civil Service examinations, the permission of unattached students at the universities, the annual ministerial statement on the progress of education, all took their origin from his suggestions. With regard to Joseph Brotherton it is hardly necessary to say anything. No one who knew him could imagine his co-operating otherwise than actively and usefully in any undertaking in which he might be interested. I cannot claim to have enjoyed Mr. Brotherton's acquaintance, but I well remember the opinion entertained of him in Manchester and Salford, and the universal respect entertained by men of every form of opinion for a member of a small unpopular sect, and a representative of political views which many then deemed extreme. Manchester and Salford only reflected the opinion of Parliament. Seldom has any one, beginning public life under such disadvantages, obtained such personal influence within the House of Commons as Joseph Brotherton.

Edwards' services did not go unrewarded. He obtained the chief librarianship of the first important free library established under Mr. Ewart's Act, the library at Manchester. The salary was, indeed, grievously inadequate, but although the public had been taught the value of libraries they had yet to learn the value of librarians. Nevertheless, the opportunity of his life seemed to have come to him. Alas! it had not. There was something in the man's nature which disqualified him for harmonious co-operation with superior authorities. His seven years' service at Manchester, though full of useful work and highly honourable to him in many respects, terminated in his enforced resignation. From this time he lived the life of an author, and of a librarian undertaking special tasks with no binding official tie. In the former capacity he accomplished important things. His *Memoirs of Libraries* and *Founders and Benefactors of the British Museum* are standard works, and his other literary performances have value. His library work as cataloguer and calendarer was chiefly performed at Oxford. For many years he supported himself gallantly and honourably by his sole exertions; but when at last his library services were no longer required, and the fields of authorship were occupied by younger men, and he had nothing to rely upon but a most pitiful pittance of a pension, he found himself confronted by the dread of

want and the actual presence of debt, most galling to his independent spirit. For this, let me say, his profession bears no blame. Had his position been known, aid would have been instantly forthcoming, tendered in a manner which, far from humiliating, would have honoured him. It had been actually proposed that he should preside over the first conference of the Library Association, and although his deafness and other circumstances rendered the proposal inexpedient, it showed that the Free Libraries did not forget to whom they were in a measure indebted for their existence. But he was living in this remote village, beyond which little respecting his circumstances could transpire, and so it came to pass that one winter's night, alone and despairing, he almost perished in the snow, not far from the spot where we are now standing. Yet he rallied, and closed his eyes in peace ; and we are here to-day discharging a duty towards his memory ; in so far as we are librarians honouring our profession, and in any case honouring ourselves. Some of the reflections thus aroused are too obvious to be dwelt upon ; others too serious ; in either case I pass them by. Yet I cannot forbear remarking that many years have passed since it has been possible to erect a memorial to Edward Edwards, and that if the possible has become the actual, and if this quiet churchyard no longer affords an illustration of the too true proverb that "everybody's business is nobody's business," we owe this to one of whom, as he is now among us, I will make no particular mention, but through whose disinterested exertion it is that the Preacher's saying, so often applicable, is applicable no longer to Free Libraries and their founder : "There was found a poor wise man, and he by his wisdom delivered the city ; yet no man remembered that same poor man".

MR. WILLIAM E. A. AXON, LL.D., F.R.S.L.  
(of Manchester).

IN proposing the toast of "The Memory of Edward Edwards" there is the satisfaction of knowing that those whom I address appreciate his worth so truly that there is no need to elaborate his claims to grateful remembrance. We do not honour him as a "faultless monster," though his failings were not such as would embarrass even a Puritan biographer. We recognise in him the qualities of the pioneer, clearing the way and making the path smoother for those who follow. Edward Edwards was a man to whom there came the inspiration of a great thought, and who devoted himself to its realisation with all the energy and enthusiasm of his nature. At a time when the provision for popular education was scanty and imperfect, Edwards was impressed by the waste of talent that lay sterile for lack of culture and opportunity. Then there came to him the thought of bringing the fruits of learning and the inspiration of genius to the homes of the people. By the institution of public libraries, freely accessible

to all, he desired to bring not only the wealthy and the learned, but also the masses of the nation under the influence of the best teaching of all ages. The precepts of Religion, the speculations of "Divine Philosophy," History's long record, the "fairy tales of Science," the weighty thoughts of the Statesman and Economist, the varied glories of the Arts, the myriad inventions of "men, the workers, ever reaping something new," the travellers' tales of far-off and wondrous lands, the parables of the novelist and the dramatist, the song of the poet—in short, all that Learning and all that Literature can give for recreation, for reproof and for inspiration—this he desired to make the heritage of the whole English people. It was a lofty thought, and not easy of accomplishment, yet much of it was realised in his lifetime. Few men without the advantages of patronage, position or fortune have made so great an impression upon the age as Edward Edwards. He has enlarged the possibilities of thousands of poor students, and has brought into myriads of cottage homes the moulding influences of the great minds of all time. This generation is reaping where he sowed, and the end of the harvest is still far off—nay, is increasing in richness year by year. We all honour and appreciate the pious feeling which has led our friend and colleague, Mr. Thomas Greenwood, to place a memorial over the resting-place of Edward Edwards. It is fitting and appropriate that this should be done, and that pilgrims from far and near standing by the grave of the pioneer of the free library movement should see the memorial erected by one who has inherited the love of literature and the enthusiasm of humanity which animated Edward Edwards. But there are in reality many other Edwards' monuments. The great municipal collections of Manchester, Liverpool, Birmingham, Leeds, Sheffield and other large towns, the marvellous development in this direction which London has witnessed in recent years, the noble library benefactions of Mr. Andrew Carnegie and Mr. J. Passmore Edwards, the hundreds of free libraries that have come into existence, east, west, north and south, though they do not bear his name are not less the fruits, direct and indirect, of his labour. The free libraries have given the possibility of wider culture, exacter knowledge, purer pleasures, loftier ideals, and greater usefulness to those who avail themselves rightly of the proffered opportunities. Hundreds and thousands have seized the boon, and it is the resulting gain to the community from these better and brighter lives that gives us the strongest cause for cherishing and honouring the memory of Edward Edwards.

MR. CHARLES W. SUTTON, M.A. (Chief Librarian,  
Manchester Public Libraries).

A FEW words are expected from me on this interesting occasion, on account of my having for so many years held a position that was filled

by him whose memory we are met to honour. Edward Edwards had retired from the Manchester Free Library seven years before I entered it as a junior assistant. He left Manchester and did not return to it, and I never had the opportunity of meeting him, although in his later years I not infrequently exchanged letters with him. One of my first duties on entering the Free Library was to arrange a mass of official correspondence which Edwards had left behind him, and I well remember being astonished at its copiousness and diversity. But it was only in after years, when I had become accustomed to the evidences of Edwards' operations everywhere around me, that I was able to appreciate, I dare hardly say *fully* appreciate, the amount of work which he got through in connection with the establishment and early years of that institution. He had, as we know by his numerous writings, long been drawing attention to England's paucity of educational facilities, especially in regard to public libraries; he had inspired Parliamentary action and had foreseen the result of the measure which at his instigation was introduced by Mr. Ewart and backed by Mr. Brotherton. When he became librarian of the first library to be established under the provisions of that legislative measure, he was obliged to accept a salary miserably out of proportion to his deserts; but poverty was ever the badge of the librarian tribe. He laid down schemes and drew up rules which have been followed by all subsequent town libraries. He compiled a wonderful list of books to be acquired, and he purchased the volumes wisely and economically. These books he then classified and catalogued in a way that proved him to be as great a master in practical librarianship as he was in the literary advocacy of libraries. The success of the library was immediate and has been lasting, and its novelty brought inquiries from many quarters, far and near, and Edwards' correspondence must have taken up no inconsiderable portion of his time; but his enthusiasm and willingness to spare no trouble in extending the benefits of libraries doubtless lightened his task. Amidst these engrossing official duties he found time to work at his monumental *Memoirs of Libraries*, and to write sundry smaller contributions. Edwards is said to have been a proud man, who did not always find it possible to forget that he was in mental endowments and professional attainments a little above certain town councillors who were placed in authority over him. Friction not unnaturally was the result. He was probably rather too scornful of their attempts to teach him his business. It is pleasant to know that by his assistants and personal friends he was regarded as one of the most chivalrous and warm-hearted of mortals; and that the few survivors of those who knew him intimately look with cordial approval upon the proceedings in which we are engaged to-day. It should not be forgotten that the first Public Libraries Act did not fully satisfy Edwards. In its passage through Parliament it had suffered changes that were in his eyes objectionable. Some defects which he pointed

out in 1853 were subsequently remedied, but one of them still remains, namely, the limit of the library rate. He suggested "the omission of the limit affixed to the rate, leaving it to be settled by Town Councils, according to the circumstances of each town, at their own discretion and upon their ordinary responsibility". There must now be few people who would say that Edwards was not right. I shall attempt no eulogy of Edward Edwards as the pioneer of rate-supported libraries, as the historian of libraries, or as a man of letters; nor try to define his place among the educational reformers of the nineteenth century. It must be enough for me to express the delight I have taken in following the pious labours of our friend Mr. Greenwood, and my satisfaction in being permitted to play a small part in the ceremonies of this day, which in more senses than one we may call a memorable day.

MR. JOHN J. OGLE (Director of Technical Instruction,  
Bootle).

THE generous instincts of Mr. Thomas Greenwood have put within our reach an occasion of happy pilgrimage to the shrine of one of the illustrious dead, whose monument stands in every town in Great or in Greater Britain possessed of a municipal public library. Yet there was no reason why the mosses should creep over the soil of Edwards' grave for lack of stone whereto to cling. The memorial to-day unveiled may safely be left to the keeping of posterity. May it never need the attentions of an Old Mortality of the future to clear away the encrusting vegetation! May it be a sacred place of pilgrimage for book-lovers of unborn generations, a shrine of gratitude to the father of municipal public libraries, and the discoverer of that beneficent profession, the municipal librarian.

Notwithstanding the now popular cry "things not words" in the educational world, the word which stands for spirit and life must continue to be accounted for in educating our youth. Laboratories let us have by all means, kindergartens and workshops, school journeys and surveys, but the educational institute is incomplete without the library. Edwards pre-eminently took the educational view of the public library—he was not led away by the thought of its recreative function, important as that function is. The recreative must be tolerated for the advantage of the educational uses. The many must be pleased after a wholesome fashion that students, few or many, in obscurity or in the light, poor as well as rich, may have books wherewith to make of them scholars for the public good. Twenty years before the date of Forster's Elementary Education Act, Edwards and Ewart had scored a victory for popular education, the full significance of which, in the history of British Education, has not yet been realised by his compatriots.

But this was not all: the public library being won, it was necessary that some one should show the way to build and furnish and administer it. This Edwards did at Manchester. In the midst of distressing discouragements he laboured on, and left the fruit of his experience for others' use in the practical part of his great work, *Memoirs of Libraries*. This surely was work enough for one, but Edwards was a scholar as well as a practical man, and ever hungry for work. He took the history of libraries for his province, and collected with undaunted industry the materials for the first part of his *Memoirs of Libraries* from a field of reading of vast extent. Every later worker in this field must be greatly indebted to Edwards. How keenly every librarian regrets that he did not live to complete his revision of this work!

After all, the great achievement of Edwards from the national or international point of view was that he not only did more than any other man for the municipalisation of the public library, but he set the pattern of the well-founded and well-governed town library; he realised its educational importance, he made possible the correlation of the public library with the different parts of our public educational system; he made the use of books, other than school text-books, an integral part of the training of every educated citizen. As an educator Edward Edwards deserves to rank with Comenius, Froebel, Herbart and Horace Mann. Like these he worked assiduously in the planting and fostering of a fruitful idea.

I cannot claim to have known Edwards in the flesh, but I have spent hours among his papers; I have dipped into his diary, his note-books, his huge commonplace books; I have perused many of his friends' letters to him, and seen the reflection of his heart and purpose, his character and feeling, in a more intimate way than any reader of his published writings alone. And by these experiences I claim to have had some contact with the soul and spirit of Edward Edwards. He was not a perfect being; but his ideas were noble, his affections were pure, his disinterestedness was exalted, his foresight was considerable, his work was sound. He builded not of hay and stubble, but of enduring brass; he sacrificed not to popular applause, but to conscience, to duty, to God.

Speaking as one of the younger generation, I add my pebble of praise to the cairn of his memory. Before I sit down may I be permitted to add a note of admiration for the generous work on behalf of the same cause as Edwards', which for many years has characterised our host of to-day. Since the publication of the first edition of *Public Libraries* in the year of Edwards' decease until now, Mr. Thomas Greenwood's labours, generosity, zeal and sacrifice have been unremitting and exemplary.

The Rev. William Sells, the present Rector of Niton, and the Rev. R. Allen Davis, Congregational Minister, Ventnor, took part in the simple service held at the grave.

The following letter has been received by Mr. Greenwood:—

“ 68 ALBERT HALL MANSIONS, S.W.,  
“ *22nd February, 1902.*

“ DEAR SIR,

“ I have been unavoidably prevented, by much correspondence, from writing sooner to you to say with what great interest I and my sister read the account in the *Times* of the monument erected by you at Niton, in the Isle of Wight, to Mr. Edward Edwards, and the *most* well-described and well-merited details of his life, devoted to the cause of Public Libraries, as well as of our father's constant work with the same end in the House of Commons. If we are ever again near Niton we shall certainly go to see the memorial.

“ I remain, Dear Sir,

“ Yours truly,

“ MARY A. EWART.”

[The italics are Miss Ewarts'.]

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[Compiled by Mr. JAMES DUFF BROWN, Borough Librarian, Finsbury Public Libraries.]

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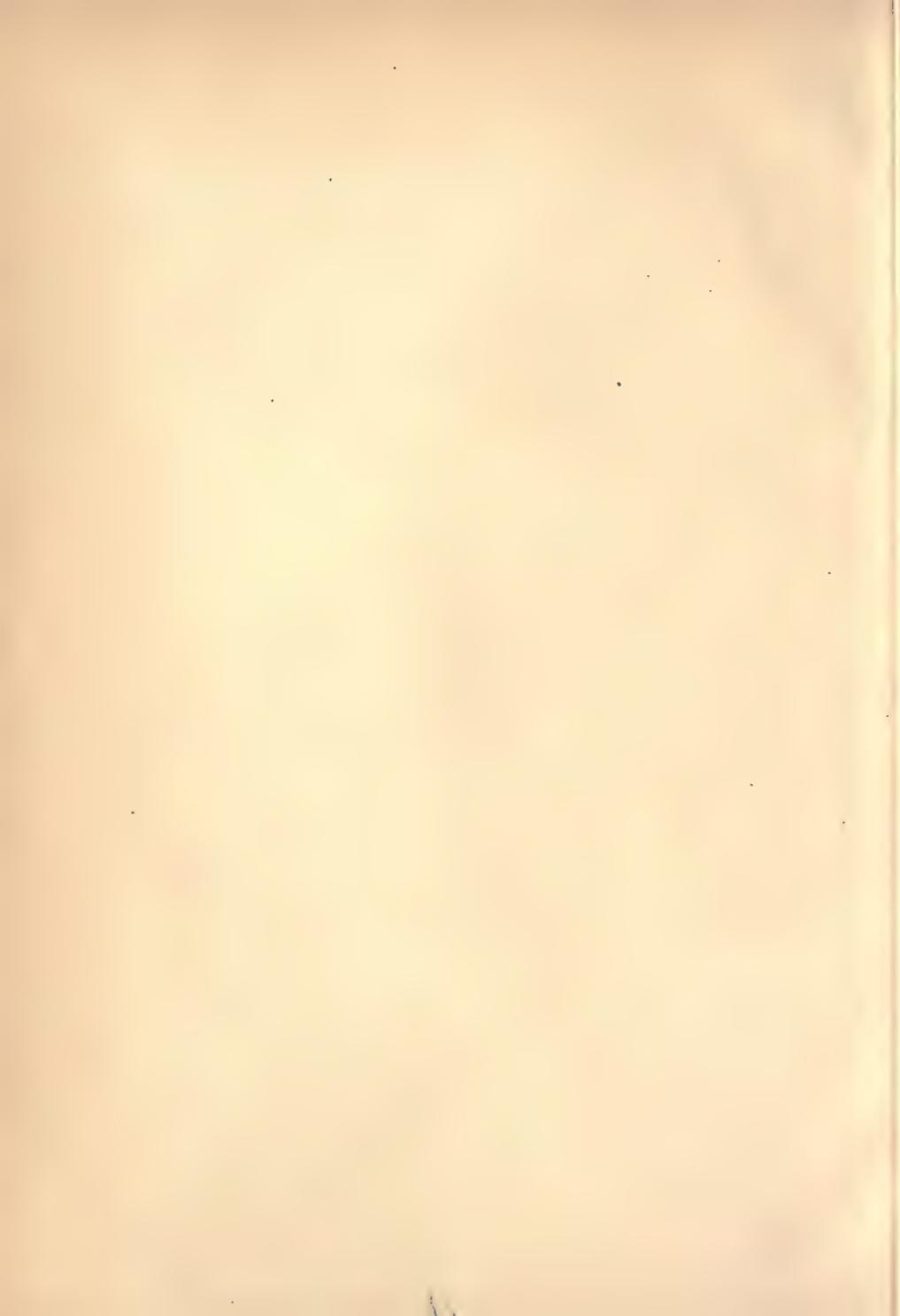
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